Mercy Triumphant.

THE

KINGDOM

OF

CHRIST

ENLARGED

Beyond the Narrow Bounds which have been wont to be set unto it.

By *Edward Lane*, Minister of the Gospel.

BEING

An Antidote against a Book lately come out, of Doctor *Du-Moulin's*,

CALLED

Moral Reflections upon the number of the Elect.

WHEREIN

The said Author will prove by Scripture, that not one in a Hundred Thousand (nay probably not one in a Million) from *Adam* down to our Times shall be saved.

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KING OF CHRIST

CHARLES

TO THE READER.

Chriſtian Reader.

A *Certain Book hath lately been ſcattered among us, Entituled* Moral Reflections upon the number of the Elect, *proving plainly (as it pretendeth) from Scripture-Evidence, that not one in a hundred Thouſand (nay probably not one in a Milllon) from* Adam *down to our times ſhall be ſaved.*

It is certainly a very bold Sally that is hereby made upon us all (poor men) the whole World over, Tanto Hiatu *to drive us like Sheep ſo furiouſly into ſuch a*

dreadful Precipice from whence there can be no recovery. The Commander of this Sally is, it ſeems, by the Word fixed upon the Front, Dr. Lewis du Moulin *late History-Profeſſor in* Oxford, *which the Printer, as his* Anteſignanus, *carryeth before him, that he might be the more formidable: For as for the Word,* viz. proved plainly by Scripture Evidence *I will not ſay it is a plain Lie (though I might without any Offence before wiſe Men) but it is a falſe Alarm, as this following Diſcourſe ſhall cleerely demonſtrate. Which Diſcourſe though it was never intended to put a Stop to his Carriere, for I had not ſo much as heard of it till about the time of writing this Epiſtle; but it was only commended to the Inſpection of an honeſt Judicious Friend, a Miniſter of the Goſpel in or about* London, *with whom I have ſome Acquaintance, and becauſe I would not lean too much to my own Underſtanding, nor yet rely upon the Judgment of one ſingle man in a Matter of this Moment, I did deſire it might be imparted to others alſo by him, that they might give their Opinion of it.*

But aſſoon as I heard of this Furious Zealot that he had proclaimed the worſt Defiance that can be imagined, againſt the major part of mankind, and that in ſuch peremptory Terms not to be endured by any who are not void of all Humanity. I could not be quiet in my Mind, till I had cauſed this poor Scout *armed ſome Months before, to go with as much ſpeed as might be, to proclaim the Peace with which I had Entruſted it. Not but that I like well of this Doctors Zeal in taking men off from their ſinful Security, of which there is great need in this Generation, (only we muſt not, as good* Job *adviſeth us, ſpeak wickedly for God,) but I utterly abhor his Wreſting of Holy Scripture to make it a Patron to his Corrupt Phanſy: He conſiders not (poor man) how much Diſſervice he hath done to Jeſus Chriſt by this Peſtilent Book, nor how much he hath gratified the Devil by it. His Arguments are generally Vain and Childiſh, which I could eaſily make evident: But I doubt not ſome that are more able will undertake him, who with a full ſtrength both from Scripture and right Reaſon will ſufficiently*

make

make the Folly of them manifeſt, nor is it likely he ſhould ſcape without a ſevere Check from our Univerſities, which Will not, I preſume, ſuffer our Church and Nation to be tamely Deluded in a Point that deeply concerns the Honour of our great Redeemer Jeſus Chriſt, and that by a French Foreiner.

He is indeed a Stranger unto me: I knew, I confeſs, one of his Name about fifty Years paſt, that was a Lecturer in a Church near London-Stone, but for this Doctor I never ſo much as ſaw him that I know of, nor heard of him, till I heard of this Pamphlet of his, ſo deſtructive to the precious Souls of Men, and by which I would I had not had the Occaſion now to know him: but knowing him ſo far as I do, I wiſh heartily he may have Grace to repent him of this his pernicious Tenet, wherein he utters Words bordering upon Blaſphemy, viz. That what he writes of this Subject is as great a Truth as any can be in the World. Os durum, Apage, Rather it may be ſaid there can ſcarcely be found a groſſer Untruth than this that he hath now publiſhed; But as I have ſaid I

wiſh

wiſh he may repent of it by a timely Retractation of it in publick, that he may wipe off that foul Blot which he hath by it brought upon his Name, and that he may himſelfe eſcape thereby the Hazard he is in, of running Headlong into the ſame Danger whereto he judges many Millions of People more dear, it may be, in Gods account than himſelf, which Danger Mr. Baxter, whom he ſo highly Extols, was careful to avoid; for thus he writeth in the ſecond Part of his Defence of the Principles of Love, Pag. 40. I confeſs, ſaith he, I Affect none of the Honour of that Orthodoxneſs which conſiſteth in Sentencing Millions, and Kingdoms to Hell, whom I am not acquainted with. But this Doctors Ambition is to be the Chair-man amongſt all the reſt of theſe Judges of evil Thoughts, viz. to pronounce the Sentence, though the beſt of it is, his Sentence will not be Enrolled in Heaven, when his Raſhneſs in pronouncing it will, without Repentance, be there upon Record againſt him. He hath likewiſe, it ſeems, Ingratiated himſelf with a noble Perſonage to whom he Dedicates his Book, and whom he humbly Beggs to lay at her Honours Feet for Protection:

But

But it is ſcarce to be believed that upon a diligent Searching into the Matter, any of a noble Extraction, Virtuous Diſpoſition and Chriſtian Education, will ſo much as Countenance him in this his Unchriſtian Aſſertion. Neverthelefs ſhould he ſo far prevail with his ſly Inſinuations as to obtain a Patronizing of it, for my part my Reſolution ſhall ever be this, Floreat Evangelium, ruat Cælum.

Farewel.

E. L.

Mercy

Mercy Triumphant.

THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST ENLARGED

Beyond the narrow Bounds, which have been wont to be ſet unto it.

IT hath been a Tradition a long time among all ſorts of People Learned and Unlearned. That becauſe our Lord Jeſus Chriſt in his Sermon on the Mount gave ſuch ſtrict Precepts, that never any Lawgiver did the like, adding withal a ſevere Warning to his Diſciples in theſe words. *Enter ye in at the ſtrait Gate, for wide is the Gate, and broad is the Way that leadeth to Deſtruction, and many there be which go in thereat. Becauſe ſtrait is the Gate, and narrow is the Way, which leadeth unto Life, and few there be that find it.* (Meaning probably thereby that they ſhould not take to themſelves that Liberty which was commonly uſed by other People in the World, but be very exact in obſerving thoſe Rules of an elevated Nature which he

Mat. 7. 13. 14.

had ſet them.) That therefore the number of thoſe that ſhall be ſaved at the laſt Day is but ſmall, very ſmall in compariſon of thoſe that ſhall be damned in Hell for ever.

But let us now inquire into this matter: For, though I ſay not but that this Warning may have a Meaſure in it Reaching to all, who are the true Diſciples of Chriſt to the end of the World, yet will it not afford any Warrant for ſuch an Opinion that is here derived from it. Neither can the ſaid Opinion be Juſtified upon any Terms.

Having thus, in ſhort, declared freely my Judgment and Reſolution, I may (poſſibly) have an Imputation put upon me of a bold Singularity. And ſome will be ready to ſay, *Tu autem*, who are you that pretend to have more Underſtanding than others, and will venture thus to Correct your Elders and Superiours? But O *Benedicite*. I do not howſoever take upon me to Correct *Magnificat*, neither will I, though I be *In Artibus Magiſter Quinquagenarius*, Cenſure magiſterially all thoſe that maintain the ſaid Opinion, but only offer to conſideration my Conceptions upon it; Wherein if I err, I ſhall be willing and glad to be better Inſtructed. And ſince the Church of *England* (which is a cheif Pillar and Ground of Truth, and which under God is my Oracle to guide me in my way to Heaven) hath in her Articles, the Summary of her Chriſtian Profeſſion, left this Point undetermined, we may have a Latitude in this caſe, every man to propound his Judgment with Humility.

Firſt then, as for this premiſed Scripture on which the aforeſaid Opinion ſeems to be Grounded; Dr. *Hammond* (whom I mention, not as if he were to be accounted Infallible, but as one approved for Learning and Holineſs;) He I ſay, doth not ſtretch it to ſuch a Senſe; but in his Paraphraſe upon it, rendereth it thus. Firſt upon the thirteenth Verſe (where Chriſt ſpeaking to his Diſciples, in effect ſaith) Let all your Care be to ſet your ſelves upon the Chriſtian Courſe, and to go thorough with it, be it never ſo ſtrict, for it is eaſie to enter upon a vitious Courſe, and to go thorough that: Multitudes these are, great Store (both of Jews and Heathens, as the ſaid Author renders it in another place) which paſs that way to Eternal Deſtruction. And upon the fourteenth Verſe he addeth to the ſame purpoſe. There will be likewiſe all need of your Care, becauſe the Entrance and whole Courſe of a Chriſtian Life is made of perfect ſtrictneſs, in oppoſition to the looſeneſs of the World, and that makes ſo many to chooſe it.

His Prac. Catechiſ.

And

And the Leſſon which I for my part would learn herehence, ſhall be through Gods Grace, to teach me who will be a Diſciple of Chriſt, to be very watchful over my ſelf, that I may be a Chriſtian indeed by a ſtrict and ſtraight Conformity to the Rules of our Lawgiver, leſt if I follow a Multitude in doing that which is Evil, I may in the end fall into Perdition. Such or the like uſe it would become us all to make of theſe Words, rather than by an unwarrantable Interpretation of them, to intrude our ſelves into the Juſtice-Seat of the great and Omnipotent God, taking upon us the boldneſs to Judge before the time, as if a liberty were allowed thereto from this Scripture, which upon a due Search into it, we ſhall find, yet further, that it intendeth no ſuch matter; for let it be conſidered,

Seeing we are not now under the ſevere Tutoring of that Rigid Schoolemaſter, the Law, but under the calme and gentle Diſpenſations of Grace, or (as my aforeſaid excellent Doctor renders it in his Paraphraſe upon *Rom.* 6. 14.) not under the weak uneffi-cacious Pedagogy of the Law, which could only forbid Sin and denounce Judgment, but never yeild any man hope of Mercy or amendment, but under a Kingdom of Grace, where there is Pardon for Sin upon Repentance. Seing I ſay it is ſo, we may be well aſſured that the way of teaching the Doctrine of Salvation is to be by the ſweet and peaceable *Suada* of the Goſpel, Which certainly is moſt prevailing to lead men to Repentance. Unlikely therefore is it that Chriſt himſelf, now at his firſt entrance upon his Work, which the Father had appointed him to do for the Salvation of the World, would begin with ſuch Terror as to preach Damnation to the greateſt part of mankind, which certainly he did, if he ſaid that few ſhall be ſaved by him, and that it was ſo decreed by the eternal Counſel of Heaven (as it is likewiſe pretended by thoſe that are for this deſtructive Opinion;) we have heard otherwiſe out of the Goſpel, that when Chriſt began to Preach, he ſaid, repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand. Thus he began, and ſo he continued, giving it in charge alſo to his Diſciples that they ſhould preach the ſame Doctrine, which without doubt ſignified that in all places, and among all People where they were to come, the World ſhould know, there is a poſſibility of Salvation, upon Repentance, for them all. For let me ask what is this Gate, and what is this way that leadeth to Life, but Chriſt himſelf? *I am the Door* (ſaith he John 10. 9.) *By me if any man enter in, he ſhall be ſaved*; And again (*John* 14. 6.) *I am the Way, no man can come to the Father, but by me.* And is this Gate ſo ſtrait, and this way ſo narrow that

few can go in the one, or enter in at the other? It cannot enter into my Heart to imagine, let all the World say the contrary, but that the Righteousness of Christ is sufficient to Justifie all mankind, yea that the major part of mankind shall be saved by him.

It is a saying worthy of all Acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the World to save Sinners; And doth he now say that few shall be saved by him? What a Dishonour must this be both to him, and to his Father that sent him? Yea, did he come to destroy the Works of the Devil, as became the Captain of our Salvation, and can the Devil Immure himself still in his Works and strong Holds, so as to be able to draw, yea to drive the greatest part of the World under his Power for ever? This unavoidably must be granted, if that Opinion be true, *viz.* Because Christ hath said, strait is the Gate, and narrow is the Way that leadeth unto Life, &c. Few therefore shall be saved. These things considered we must necessarily render some other account of these Words, than hath been wont to be given of them; For, certain it is, the Usual Sense carryeth with it such a Sound of Horrour, as is utterly inconsistent with the Nature of God, the Merits of Christ, and the glad Tidings of the Gospel, as may be here seen at large in the pursuance of this Discourse.

First then, this caution of Christian Strictness and Difficulty seems to be a Branch of that great Law of Equity written by the Evangelist in the Words immediately before, which must reach to our very Enemies, as appears *Luke* 6.27. 31. Where this Rule is also prescribed, *viz. As ye would that men should do unto you, do ye also to them likewise.* A Precept it is, very difficult to corrupt Nature, and the broad Road which is contrary thereto, is the Common walk of worldly minded Men, who are not willing to enter into any Course that may not agree with their Humour, Interest, and Advantage; Which Road Christ would have all his Disciples, to the end of the World, carefully to shun.

2. The Word ὅτι which is set in the beginning of this fourteenth Verse, is not always *Conjunctio Causalis*, but sometimes is a Note of Interrogation, or admiration, as it may be here ὅτι στενὴ ἡ πύλη, &c. *How strait is the Gate, and how narrow is the Way that leadeth to Life, and how few there be that find it?* And accordingly our Translators, as doubting of the Congruity of their Word (because) have in stead of it set in the Margine the Word (How) Which clearly signifies, they were not so positive in their Determination here, as they were before in the other Clause of the wide Gate, and broad way.

3. It

3. It is obſervable that Chriſt himſelf varyeth his Words here when he ſpeaks of the ſtrait Gate and narrow way, from what he had ſaid of the wide Gate and broad Way; he ſaith not here of the ſtrait Gate, few there be that go in thereat, for then indeed there had been ſome Colour for this Opinion of the ſmall number of thoſe that ſhall be ſaved. No, but few there be that find it. And what finding is this? The original Word Εὑρίσκοντες ſignifies there are but few in the World that are ſo wiſe as they ſhould be to come to the true knowledg and underſtanding of it, meaning without the guidance of Gods gracious and good Spirit, none ſhall ever find it. For

4. This Caution muſt be underſtood according to the Tenour of the Goſpel, even as all the ſtrict and elevated Precepts, which Chriſt here giveth to his Diſciples are, *viz.* With a Reſtriction to the Grace of God, ſo far as they concern thoſe that are Intereſſed in this Grace; And they are raiſed up to ſuch a height to this very end, that Grace might be the more exalted thereby.

True it is there is another reaſon beſides this of the ſtrictneſs in Chriſts Doctrine, which is this. Our beloved Saviour knowing the Jews, and among them eſpecially the Scribes and Phariſees (of whom he ſpeaks expreſly, Chap. 5. 20.) to be pertinaciouſly ſet upon the bare Letter of the Law, and perceiving that his Doctrine would be cavilled at by them, as not agreeable to that Law. Firſt that he might take away Occaſion from thoſe that deſired Occaſion, he ſaith plainly he came not to deſtroy the Law or the Prophets, but to fulfil; And after that, to ſhew the Vanity of their Pretenſions to the Law, he gives the right Senſe of ſeveral of theſe Laws, far ſurpaſſing the ſlender and jejune Imaginations of thoſe Illegal Expoſiters of it. As namely, what is meant by the Law againſt killing, what of that concerning Adultery, what of Swearing, what of loving our Neighbour, *&c.* In all which he far tranſcends thoſe proud Boaſters of the Law, raiſing it up to that Elevation which the Lawgiver God himſelf intended by it: And conſequently it was neceſſary for theſe who would ſet up the Righteouſneſs of the Law (if it were but in a Rivallity with him) to hear how ſtrait the Gate ſhould be, and how narrow the way that leadeth to Life, and how few ſhould find it.

But to his Diſciples his Doctrine hath another Leſſon; all whatſoever he had ſaid, or whatſoever he will ſay is to be underſtood according to the Terms of the new Covenant, which he came to Seal and eſtabliſh. For as he came not to deſtroy the Law or the Prophets, ſo much leſs did he come to alter, or to digreſſe from the

order

order and method of Salvation, which he had received from the Father, that is, to ſave all thoſe that repent and beleive. This is the irreverſible Law of Heaven, nor was there any Word ever came out of the Mouth of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt contradictory thereunto. This Sermon, as it is commonly called, which he Preached on the Mount, muſt not be ſtretched ſo far in the leaſt Particle of it, as to fruſtrate that Grace whereof he is, by Order and Decree from the Father to be, by the Holy Ghoſt, the ſole Diſpenſer and Adminiſtrator.

Away then with all that ſeeming Zeal which putteth Chriſt out of his Office, as this undoubtedly doth which wreſteth theſe words of his to ſuch a ſiniſter Senſe, as is here declared. We (alas) conſider not what Wrong we do unto our ſelves thereby, for what are we, the beſt of us all, without Chriſt? what, but nothing? Without him we can do nothing, without him we can hope for nothing. But as the Holy Apoſtle ſaid, ſo may every true Beleiver ſay, *I can do all things through Chriſt that ſtrengthens me*, I can enter in at this ſtrait Gate, I can go upright and ſafely in this narrow way, which how ſtrait and narrow ſoever it be to impenitent Sinners, or to thoſe that are puffed up with their own Home-ſpun Righteouſneſs, I ſhall, I doubt not, find eaſie and ſweet to my everlaſting Happineſs, though all the Powers of Hell ſtood in my Way to hinder me.

So then, let this Gate be ſtrait, and this Way narrow, yet by Gods Grace, and the ſpecial Aſſiſtance of Chriſts Spirit, many ſhall find it, and not only ſo, but go in thereat.

5. Our Saviour himſelf who is the beſt Interpreter of his own Words, doth refer it (as he doth other of his Sayings of the ſame kind *v. g. Mat.*20.16. *Luk.*12.32. *Luk.*13.24.) not to the Paucity of the Veſſels of Gods Mercy which he had prepared unto Glory, but to the ſmall number of Beleiving Jews at his firſt coming unto them.

That this may be made evident, let us ſingle out the laſt cited place of Scripture, *viz*, *Luk.* 13. 24. (as being moſt pertinent to the matter in hand) there doth Chriſt ſeem to declare his Senſe in this particular, repeating the very Words which he ſpake to his Diſciples on the Mount. *Strive*, ſaith he, *to enter in at the ſtreight Gate, for many I ſay unto you will ſeek to enter in, and ſhall not be able.* It is an Anſwer (we ſee) given to a Queſtion put by one (a *Jew*) about the number of thoſe that ſhall be ſaved, Lord (ſaith he) are there few that ſhall be ſaved? To which Queſtion, no doubt, Chriſt could have given him a punctual Anſwer, for he knoweth his own,

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ſuch as are his Called and Choſen, and Faithful, being all written in his Book of Life, he could therefore have reſolved him whether they ſhall be few or many. But inſtead of ſuch an Anſwer, he puts the Queſtioniſt upon his Duty, ſtrive (ſaith he) to enter in at the ſtreight Gate, &c. Which is (as a good Author gloſſeth upon it) intended to this purpoſe; You demand of me, whether few ſhall be Saved, but I admoniſh you not to trifle away time in ſuch Queſtions, but let there be a holy Contention among you with all ſpeed to enter in at the Door of my Goſpel, for the time is but ſhort in which you have a Capacity of Faith to obtain the Kingdom of God. For when the Goſpel ſhall be taken from you becauſe of your Unbeleif, you ſhall find how few of you will be in a State of Salvation. Now the Remiſſneſs and untowardneſs of this Jewiſh People was ſo great that few of them did Beleive the Goſpel, and therefore few of them at Chriſts firſt Manifeſtation in the Fleſh did enter in by the true Gate, that is Jeſus Chriſt.

And that theſe Words of the ſtreight Gate and narrow Way, and of the ſmall number that finds it, were directed to the Contemporary Jews, is evident alſo by the Apology which thoſe Jews ſhall make for themſelves at the laſt Day (as Chriſt foretold them in theſe Words) then (meaning when the Door is ſhut, the Day of Grace paſt) ſhall ye begin to ſay, *We have Eaten and Drauken in thy Preſence, and thou haſt Taught in our Streets*; Which Apology neverthleſs ſhould do them no good at all, for they that Deſpiſed him here, he will not own them then, but he will bid them *depart from him.* Yea and that which follows (ver. 29.) ſignifies the ſame thing, *viz. They ſhall come from the Eaſt and from the Weſt, and from the North, and from the South, and ſhall ſit down in the Kingdom of God*, Implying that though but few Jews (So alſo is it underſtood by another good Writer) ſhould receive the Faith, yet Diſciples ſhall come to Chriſt from all Quarters of the World, and by him be received and entertained as at a Feaſt. *Dr. Hammond.*

This Scripture then doth not at all countenance that Opinion of the fewneſs of thoſe that ſhall be ſaved at the laſt Day. Or ſay, the number of them ſhall be by many Millions, as it is commonly Said, leſs then of thoſe that ſhall be caſt into outer Darkneſs.

Which Opinion I ſhall now more at large examine, and try whether it hath any agreement with the Analogy of Faith, or may preponderate that right Reaſon which can be alleged againſt it. Which of the Creeds is it that hath ever been maintained in the Church that

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gives the leaſt notice of it? What General Council in all their Decrees or Canons make the leaſt mention of it! Among all the Confeſſions, Proteſtations, Declarations of the Chriſtian Faith, wherein the Reformed Churches of Chriſt in theſe latter days have Harmoniouſly agreed, where can any Title be found (I ſay not *Expropoſito*, but as Collaterally) referring unto it? To alledge the common Conſent of particular Perſons that maintain it, is of no Force, for what would that be, but to ſet up meer humane Dictates for our Rule, as if they were Oracles Infallible, and of equal Authority with the Holy Word of God? (which yet neither is to be yeilded to Creeds, nor to general Councils, nor to publick Confeſſions of Faith) we are to call no man Maſter upon Earth in matters of Eternal Salvation) So hath our Maſter in Heaven given us a Charge; And ſhould any one now in this Generation mancipate his Judgment to the Arbitrary Opinions of his fore-Fathers (which is and hath been Decryed ſufficiently) or of the times wherein he liveth (which deſerves as much to be condemned,) Doth he not digreſs from the Rule, and diſobey the Command that our ſaid Maſter hath ſet us?

But let me not be miſunderſtood, I do not in the leaſt detract from Creeds, or Councils, or Conſtitutions and Canons of Churches (enacted for publick Order or any other common Good) that Reſpect and Honour which is due unto them, neither is this laſt Warning premiſed, as if I would Dictator-like, impoſe upon any a neceſſity of Subſcribing to me in this preſent Debate (unleſs they ſee juſt Cauſe and cannot avoid it.) It is indeed to render a Reaſon why I diſſent from others in it (as we are commanded in Holy Scripture) deſiring alſo that a Liberty be granted unto me, which every man may challenge to make uſe of his Aſterick or *Verum* in things that are but circumſtantial and undetermined. As ſeemeth good unto him.

Nor can a Diſcourſe upon this Subject be accounted a nice Curioſity, the Glory of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt our great Redeemer being concerned in it. And it muſt be acknowledged to be very Meet and Right, and our bounden Duty to Aſcribe unto Chriſt all the Honour that can poſſibly be imagined by us (whether it be by Circumſtantial, or by Fundamental, or by Rational Deductions of Truth) all, I ſay, which may be without wrong to Divine Juſtice: And ſince it hath pleaſed God to bruiſe him, and to put him to Grief, when he hath in a quiet Submiſſion to the Will of his Father, made his Soul an Offering for Sin, that is, for the Sin of the World; Who among us can chuſe but ſay, *Let him by ſeing his Seed*

Seed enjoy the Travel of his Soul, without any leſſening of his Delight and Content therein, that he may be ſatisfied. (Eſ. 53. 10. 11.)

Whereas therefore it is commonly ſaid that few ſhall be ſaved. Firſt, I grant that in ſome Senſe this Aſſertion is not to be denied; few they may be of what number ſoever in reſpect of Gods Mercies, which are infinite, and who would have all to be ſaved; few alſo in reſpect of Chriſt's Merits which are ſufficient to obtain Salvation for the whole World were it Multiplied into Millions. But ſince the Holy Spirit of God in Scripture hath ſaid of Gods Elect that they ſhall be as the Stars of Heaven for Multitude, and as the Sand of the Sea that cannot be meaſured nor numbered, and that the Multitude Cloathed with white Robes, having Palmes in their Hands was ſo great that no man could number (which large expreſſions we no where find to be uſed whenſoever mention is made of thoſe that ſhall Periſh, but only it is ſaid of them, they ſhall be many.) Since it is ſo, I would, for my part rather joyn with thoſe who dare not affirm that they ſhall be few in compariſon of thoſe that ſhall be caſt into Hell. Fearing that ſuch a Concluſion will be ſo far from exalting Chriſt's Merits that it will much diſhonour them; yea and ſo far from magnifying Gods Juſtice (as it pretendeth) that it will detract from it.

Which Word though it may ſound ſtrangely to ſome, yet is there no Strangeneſs between it and Truth. True it is, Divine Juſtice muſt be ſatisfied before any of the Sweet and Reviving Influences of Mercy could have fallen upon the Children of Men, and as true is it that the Satisfaction which Chriſt hath made for the Sin of the World, hath been more powerful to appeaſe Gods diſpleaſure againſt the World for Sin, and to bring many Souls out of the Snare of the Devil unto Glory, than Sin could be able in its moſt deadly Venome to deſtroy, or, than that Satisfaction can be which ſhall ever be giving by thoſe who are doom'd to everlaſting Fire, but never be finiſhed: For in this is only creature-Satisfaction, but in the other Divine.

Upon the account of which full Satisfaction being foreſeen and prædetermined by the wiſe Counſel of Heaven to be paid to the uttermoſt, Mercy even at the Inſtant of mans Reſtauration from his Fall, began her Triumph in the behalf of her dear Purchace rejoycing againſt Judgment, looking upon him that was to be the Executioner of it, that is, the Devil, with infinite Diſdain. And that her Joy might be full, the World was by Gods Decree to be brought under her Protection for the Sake and Safety of her Beloved Children; her Children, I ſay, the Fruit and Offſpring of Di-

vine Grace, which is and ever was (as we may Read *Pſ.* 110.3.) more fertile than the Womb of the Morning that ſpreads her Iſſue over all the Earth.

Let Mercy then Triumph, as ſhe well deſerveth: And how ſhall her Triumph be profited, if her Enemy be permitted to carry captive after him at his will, the greateſt number of thoſe that have been deluded by him? That her Triumph therefore might be the more Glorious, when in Juſtice God might have Condemned all to everlaſting Death, he left ſome to ſuffer according to their Demerits, but delivered more up into the Armes of Mercy to be ſaved; and how elſe ſhould the Merit of our great Redeemer Jeſus Chriſt prevaile more abundantly to ſave (as the Apoſtle argueth the caſe, *Rom.* 5. 15. *&c.*) than the Sin of *Adam* was to bring Death and Deſtruction upon himſelf and all his Poſterity?

The great Objection that can be here caſt in, is that the major part of the World are and have always been Aliants from the Covenant of Promiſe.

Which, though it ſhould be granted, yet will it not become us to determine of their final Eſtate, ſo as to judge them to Eternal Perdition. For as the Heavens are higher than the Earth, ſo are Gods ways higher than our ways, and his Thoughts than our Thoughts.

It is his good Pleaſure (we commonly ſay) to ſave Infants of believing Parents, who never came under the Guilt of any actual Sin, though they cannot (according to the Tenour of the Goſpel) lay hold upon Chriſt by Faith; yea though they ſhould ſuddenly or otherwiſe by ſome caſualty, die unbaptiſed (unleſs we will beleive as the Church of Rome Beleives that there is a *Limbus Infantum* where they are ſhut up for ever, ſeparated from the Joys of Heaven and the Pains of Hell.) And ſuch as are Invincibly Ignorant, as Ideots and born Changelings, and thoſe that cannot hear nor ſpeak, nor underſtand, being born Deaf and wanting ſuch Intellectuals as are proper to Rational Creatures; yet theſe we are apt charitably to beleive may alſo *non obſtante* be in a State of Salvation. And, I beſeech you, may not the Wiſdom of the Omnipotent God have its free Liberty to Act, and his Grace to operate in a way beyond our Apprehenſion for the Salvation of many of thoſe who are yet Strangers unto him? by bringing them ſooner or later into the Bond of the Covenant, in ſuch a kind and manner, and by ſuch means as ſhall ſeem good unto him? yea and without means too? For this is his Perogative, who hath ſaid, I will be Gracious to whom I will be Gracious, and I will ſhew Mercy to whom I will ſhew Mercy.

It

It muſt be granted, the Devil hath, by Gods Permiſſion, prevailed much to draw the greateſt part of the World into moſt abominable Idolatries, *&c.* and conſequently into a State of Condemnation. But we muſt ever remember, it is God that Governs the World, and that he will not allow a Scrutiny to be made by us into the Secret of his Soveraignty, or that we ſhould be buſily Inquiſitive, why he ſuffereth ſo great a part of mankind to abide ſo long, during many Generations, in the Region of Darkneſs, and in the Shadow of Death; In ſo doing we ſhall but ſhew our ſelves to be ungovernable under him: That which ſhould ſatisfie us is this, *viz.* The Government he manageth by his Incomprehenſible Wiſdom, Power, and Goodneſs, according to the Counſel of his own Will (for he is *Sui Juris* abſolute in his Power,) and for the advantage and advancement of the Kingdom of his dearly beloved Son; and this I preſume will be acknowledged by all.

For us then to conclude the final Reprobation of whole Kingdoms and Nations under this Divine Government, becauſe their preſent Infidelity is not reſtrained by the wiſe Providence of God, which ruleth in theſe Kingdoms of men, whats this, but to ſet Limits to the glorious and boundleſs Attributes of the moſt high in the Exerciſe of his Government? or to tell him, in effect, he muſt everlaſtingly condemn all theſe Aliants that are not acquainted with his Goſpel, elſe his Government fails in the Adminiſtration of it.

Is it fit for us (*Poor Worms*) to diſpute thus of Gods *Arcana Imperii*? rather ſhould we humbly adore the Infinite Wiſdom of our Governour, and confeſs his Judgments to be Unſearchable, and that his Ways are paſt finding out. What know we but that God who can bring Light out of Darkneſs, and Good out of Evil, may righteouſly confound his Enemy the great Prince of Darkneſs (who hath brought all this Miſchief into the World) even in his greateſt Strength, and in the thing wherein he hath dealt proudly, ſhew that he will be above him?

Such a Reflexion as this would (ſurely) better become us than by an Audacious Arguing to charge God fooliſhly (which though it be not uttered in *Terminis*, yet hath our Pragmatical medling with Gods Government ſuch a Senſe in it;) or in our haſt, uncharitably to Condemn the greateſt part of mankind (and that by Virtue of Gods Decree, as is likewiſe pretended) to everlaſting Fire, and in it to remedileſs Torments.

Let this then be another Conſideration which may lay a Reſtraint upon us, to keep us from the too common Arrogancy of ſenten-

cing millions of millions, &c. of our own Flesh and Blood to Hell, *viz.* We are to let God alone to govern the World, for the Kingdom is the Lords, and he it is who is the Governour among the Nations (*Ps.* 22. 18.) God is not the God of the Jews only. Hath he the ordering of them alone? (It was spoken when the Jews were Gods Selected People) *Is he not of the Gentiles also?* meaning doubtless at large all the World over. Yes, (saith the Apostle (*Rom.* 3. 29.) And so ought we to say, yes) of the Gentiles also, of what Nation or Language soever they be in any part of the World.

Add hereto, the Conversions of men are not all after one sort: Ordinarily (indeed) they are wrought by the Preaching of the Gospel: But high time it is for us to learn that the Grace and Goodness of God towards men hath not been so Limited. Many Instances are given us by approved Writers, how to men that sate in the darkness of Sin and Error, Light hath otherwayes sprung up: sometimes by Afflictions only, sometimes by Voices from Heaven, sometimes by Visions and other gracious Dispensations of Gods good Providence.

One there was of late who at his Death vowed openly he had learned more good Touching his Soul in a dark hole within the Tower of London in a few Days, than ever he could in his Life, when he was in Light and Liberty abroad. But what speak I of one, when such a Mercy hath been common to many other, even in our Days? Frequently hath this work of extraordinary Grace been wrought upon men in former times to their Conversion. St. *Augustine* by a Voice from Heaven, *viz.* *Take up and Read, take up and Read*, was directed to that Sentence (*Rom.* 13. 13.) *Not in Rioting and Drunkenness, not in Chambering and Wantonness*, &c. and was thereby brought to a Sight of his former Vanities. When *Justin Martyr* saw the innocent Christians after their slanderous and false Traducements carryed to their Deaths, patient and joyful that they were thought worthy to suffer for the Name of Christ; he himself saith in his Apology to the Emperor *Antoninus* that it occasioned his Conversion being before a Heathen.

Many Instances might be produced of the Conversions of men which by strange and wonderful means were brought to pass. But I should fall into a πάρεργον if I should here render them as they are related by good Authors: It is sufficient they are well known in the World, not to be vaine Romances, but real Truths. But from thence we may safely inferr, if God hath been so gracious to those that are without as to give them knowledg of his Salvation, according

According to the good Pleaſure of his Will (for is it not lawful for him to do what he will with his owne?) how can we ſay without a Phariſaical Arrogancy that they ſhall all Periſh for ever in their Infidelity? who among us have known the mind of the Lord? who among us have been his Counſellors? are not theſe People (how ſtrange ſoever they may ſeem unto us) ſprung from the ſame Root with us? are they not tempered of the ſame Mold? are not their Heads upwards towards Heaven, as the Heads of other Men? may are they not made after the Image of God even as we? and do not the creatures (*Craſſioris Luti*) at the very ſight of their bodily Preſence among them diſcerne ſomewhat in them of their Creator more than is in themſelves, which forceth them to a Subjection? hath not God given a natural Excellency to them (If not Superiour, yet) equal to that whatſoever it be, wherein we Pride our Selves, as if we had not received it? we know the Parable (*Mat.* 20.) *I will* ſaith the Maſter of the Vineyard, and *I will* ſaith God, *give unto this laſt even as unto thee*, which may Reach to Spiritual Endowments as well as to natural.

To conclude this Argument, as the Converſions of men are not all after one ſort, ſo probable it is, becauſe God is Rich in Mercy, and Delighteth in mercy, that millions of men in the darkeſt corners of the Earth may have ſome Diſpenſations of his Grace and Goodneſs to their Souls by ſeveral ways Inveſtigable to us (ſo is the Apoſtles word) as may, if not in their life time, yet at their departure out of this World, be ſufficient for their Salvation.

Again God doth not require in all, who are ordained to Eternal Life, the ſame Degree of Faith and Holineſs and Mortification. For as he hath ſome who grow up *Gradatim* to a full Stature in Chriſt, ſo hath he others that are but Babes, who though they be *Adulti*, men well grown in years, yet when they depart out of this Life, may be ſaid without a *Meioſis*, yea or an *Hyperbole*, to die in their Infancy. And he hath ſaid that he will not any of his little ones ſhould Periſh. Nor hath he ſet any certain time for the converſion of men, but, as it is in the Goſpel, ſome are called at the third Hour, ſome at the ſixth and ninth Houres, and ſome at the eleventh Hour; even when they have ſpent the whole day of their Age in the idle Services of the World, and idolatrous Service of the Devil, they may through Grace, have the Penny of eternal Life given them, as well as thoſe who have born the Burden and heat of the Day in the Service of God: Mercy may come upon the Wing to a poor Soul ready to periſh, *Inter Pontem et Fontem* (as the Proverb

proverb is) between the Bridge and the Brook. I am found of them that ſought me not ſaith the Lord (*Eſ.* 65. 1.) I ſaid behold me, behold me, unto a Nation that was not called by my Name, and again (*Hoſ.* 1. 10) In the place where it was ſaid unto them, ye are not my People, there it ſhall be ſaid unto them, ye are the Sons of the living God.

I know well, theſe and the like gracious Words in Scripture refer to the calling of the Gentiles in general, whom upon the rejection of the Jews God would freely take into his Covenant, and make thoſe among them that will hearken to the Voice of his Word and Spirit his beloved Children, as dear unto him as ever the Jews were. But it is not to be doubted but that they may have a meaſure reaching to particular Perſons abiding in their Ignorance and Infidelity.

We (it's true) who are the Baptized of the Lord, and ſo called with an holy calling into his Church, have reaſon to make our boaſt of God all the day long, and with all due Thankfulneſs to acknowledge his goodneſs in ſeparating us from the World, and revealing to us the miſtery of the Goſpel: yet doth not our judging to Hell whole Kingdoms of People that are Strangers to us, become us at all, as being too bold an Intruſion into Gods Prerogative, for *quis novit Senſum Domini?* (I ſay again) who hath known the Mind of the Lord? or who among us have been his Counſellours?

Nay is it imaginable that the Father of Mercies who is (as he is called Wiſd. 11. 23. 26.) φιλόψυχος, a lover of Soules, whoſe delight hath been, and ſtill is to be with the Children of men (*Pro.* 8. 31.) ſhould endure the great Enemy of Mankind (whoſe enmity againſt us is the greater becauſe of Gods goodneſs unto us) to drive headlong to eternal Perdition an innumerable Multitude of precious Souls made after the Image of God, the leaſt whereof is of more value than all the World, though the Sun, the Moon, and all the Starrs be put into the Ballance againſt it?

If then this our gracious and merciful and almighty God is pleaſed to interpoſe his Power and Goodneſs in ſaving the Souls that ſhould not die, pulling them as Brands out of the Fire, may we not have good reaſon to beleive that the Number of them is not ſmall, yea that it may exceed the number of thoſe, who for the glory of his Juſtice are left to periſh in their Infidelity? becauſe it is written his Mercies are over, or upon all his Workes, but eſpecially upon the Souls of men, of which he accounteth it a part

part of his Glory that he is the Creatour (*Eſ.* 57. 16.) and becauſe it is not his Anger, but his Mercy, his Mercy, his Mercy that endureth for ever.

True it is likewiſe God hath had a Church in this World, ever ſince he made a Covenant with *Abraham*, if not before, and ſo will have to the end of it, till his holy Purpoſe and Decree be fully accompliſhed in the Salvation of all his Elect, and this viſible Church he hath thus built and eſtabliſhed for excellent Ends and glorious Deſigns, according to his infinite Wiſdom, *viz.*

1. That his Name may be here publiquely and Solemnely called upon in the World.

2. That his beloved Son, in whom he is well pleaſed, may as a Prince and a Saviour be exalted among the Children of men.

3. That his People, who are alſo dear unto him, and are ſolemnely contracted in covenant with him, may here live together in Unity, Peace, and Love, whereby they may in ſome meaſure be Inured to that perfect State of Life which is to come, and whereto it ſhall pleaſe God to bring them,

4. That his great Wiſdom in finding out a way to ſave mankind might be publickly made known to the World.

5. Finally that the Powers of Hell may publickly alſo be diſappointed and counterwrought in their Projects and Machinations which they deviſe againſt his Crown and Dignity, and againſt the glorious work of Redemption which hath been accompliſhed in the Earth.

It is likewiſe commonly ſaid that as of old all the World periſhed in the Flood of Waters, who were not in the Ark; So out of the Church there can be no Salvation for any. Nevertheleſs we are not to ſet Bounds to this Church, otherwiſe than God hath appointed, and the Bounds that he hath ſet are determined upon thoſe Perſons of what Nation, or Country, or kindred ſoever they are, whom he hath choſen to be Heirs of Salvation, unknown unto us (for it is the Inviſible Church which will prove to be Chriſts Spouſe in the end.) As for us, I ſay again, upon whom God hath in the Face of the World, written his new Name, we muſt wait upon him in his own way ſet before us, that is, in a diligent uſe of his ordeined means for Salvation, and woe will be to us if we neglect them; but undoubtedly the Grace of God is not ſo ſtraitned, neither is his Word bound (2. *Tim.* 2. 9.) but it ſhall run and be glorified in all places of his Dominion without Controul. The great God hath an abſolute ſoveraignty over all his poor Creatures, is free to do unto them, and with them whatſoever

ſoever he pleaſeth by the liberty of his own Will, as to create them at firſt with one ſingle *Fiat* ſo to uphold them, yea to ſave them by the Word of his Power, and with a look (as he did upon *Peter*) to reduce thoſe that are gone aſtray from him. And as he is not tyed with any Popiſh or Pelagian Thongs of neceſſity, congruity, or condignity, ſo neither is his Preſence ſhut up in any Donatiſtical Limits, or Anabaptiſtical Conventicles, nor is his Church bounded within the marches of any, or of all the Kingdoms or Countreys which are uſually called by the Name of Chriſtendome, be it *Italy*, *Spain*, *France*, *Germany*, *England*, *Scotland*, *&c.* But it ſhall break forth on the right hand, and on the left (ſo ſaith the evangelical Prophet *Eſ.* 54.) and her Seed ſhall inherit the Gentiles whereſoever they be, and make the deſolate Cities, even the moſt Barbarous in the World to be inhabited with thoſe that ſhall be Heirs of Salvation: for (as the ſaid Prophets words are) the Deſolate hath many more Children, than ſhe that hath an Husband, that is, than ſhe that was ſolemnly contracted to the Lord by a matrimonial, that is, eccleſiaſtical Covenant.

But ſhould any now be deſirous to ſee this ſecret Indulgence of God towards his poor Creatures exemplified at large out of Scripture, or to behold it commonly produced into Act before their Eyes, I muſt tell them that were it commonly Viſible, it would not be accounted Secret; but Secret it muſt be, that the Order which by the divine Wiſdom is appointed in the Church, for the converſion of Sinners unto God, and for building up his People in their moſt holy Faith, may not ſuffer any prejudice by an ordinary variation from it, nor be leſs eſteemed by us, as in all likelihood it would, if we could trace the Footſteps of Gods grace and goodneſs in this kind, nevertheleſs ſome ſuch Examples I ſhall produce for their full Satisfaction in the Sequel of this Diſcourſe. Let that which we read in the 87*th. Pſalme* ſuffice for the preſent to give us ſome notice hereof.

There we find, if we will underſtand, how graciouſly God will be pleaſed to deal with a People, who by their continued Aberrations from his righteous Law are eſtranged from him. When the Prophet (who ever he was) had ſaid, glorious things are ſpoken of thee thou City of God, he preſently addeth I will make mention of *Rahab* and *Babylon*, behold *Philiſtia* and *Tyre* with *Ethiopia*; and what mention (alas) can be made of *Egypt* (called *Rahab*) or *Babylon*, and the reſt as they are there joyned together, all of them Chips of the old Chammiſh Block, unleſs it be of their Enmity againſt God and his Church? or to tell

A Robore et Superbia.

tell how foulely Polluted they were with moſt odious Abominations? Well, let it be ſo, yet even this miſerably depraved People ſhall alſo help to build up *Sion* and make it Glorious: Multitudes ſhall be born there, who ſhall be free of the Foundation built upon the holy Mountains, and the Lord (ſaith the Prophet) will account of them as his freeborn when he writeth up the People, like a King taking a Survey of his good Subjects whoſe Names are enrolled by him, in his Cenſe-Book.

But hath it ever been known (I will not ſay, that in thoſe places and Countreys the true God hath been religiouſly Worſhipped? for that poſſibly hath been, or ſhall be in proceſs of time before the End cometh, but) that the Idolatrous Iſſue and Offſpring of *Cham* and *Canaan* (for of ſuch doubtleſs is the meaning of the holy Ghoſt here) did in any Age joyn together publickly and unanimouſly to make this holy City Glorious by their ready obedience to Gods Law? this certainly hath never been done, and I think it may be ſaid nor is it likely now to be done, while the World ſtandeth.

If ſo, how come they here to have a favourable mention made of them? much rather (will ſome uſurping Judges among us ſay) do they deſerve to be marked with a black Coal of perpetual Infamy, and to be held accuſed. *Sed a fabis Abſtinendum*, the Memory which is here made and commended, is to be (*Inter Cognitores*, not *Inter Contemptores*, nor *Conſultores*) not among Deſpiſers, Cenſurers, or Ignaroes, but among ſuch as know God, and are acquainted with his Grace, and who will therefore ſay upon better Warrant than theſe Judges of evil thoughts, *Fiat verbum dei, ruat Cœlum*; God will have a Generation Maugre the Malice of Hell, which ſhall ſecretly and to the World undiſcernably ſpring up out of this curſed Root, and be born again.

For to this purpoſe (ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*) this man was borne there, and again this man was born there, *viz.* In the City of God, ſignifying that many (the ſingular Number being put collectively for the Plural) ſhould be born there, not of *Chuſh*, nor of *Miſzraim*, nor of *Canaan* (though their Progenitours by Nature) but of God; who as he formed man at firſt out of the Duſt of the Earth, ſo can he form in theſe *Egyptians*, *Babylonians*, *Phyliſtins*, *Tyrians*, *Morians* the new Creature out of the Rubbiſh of *Cham* and *Canaan*, &c. in a way and manner unknown to us, as ſeemeth good unto him; Materials (indeed) very unfit, unapt, and uncapable of ſuch a Form, but that the ſecond *Adam*, being πνεῦμα ζωοποιοῦν, had his Birth alſo with them, and in them; for ſo ſaith the *Pſal-*

miſt again, this man was borne there, that is, in St. *Auſtins* Senſe (and a very good Senſe it is) *Altiſſimus qui fundavit Civitatem factus eſt in eâ, i. e.* the moſt High, *viz.* Jeſus Chriſt, who eſtabliſheth *Sion*, was born there; his Birth it was that produced theirs.

And doubtleſs if they were formed by Chriſt, or, as the Apoſtles Word is, Chriſt was formed in them, though neither *Moſes* nor the Prophets, nor Paſtors, nor Teachers did with their Midwifery give their Attendance at the Travel, we muſt ſay, they were alſo as new Creatures born again, when the Children were at the Birth God alone gave ſtrength to perfect it. Hereupon followeth ſinging and rejoycing in Heaven among the Angels of God (*Luk.* 15. 10) where all Springs of ſpiritual Joy do flow abundantly. Thus it is uſual with us here in this World when our Children are borne among us ſafe and ſound, Singers and Players on Inſtruments (*Præcentor et Chorus*) are called to make our Mirth increaſe, and our Joy to be more abundant.

If then Gods Heart be enlarged, and his Mercies extended towards his poor Creatures, the Heathen, and conſequently towards the major part of mankind, to ſave them from their Sins, is it fit that we ſhould be ſtraitned in our Bowels to them? what though Multitudes in the World have not ſuch means of Salvation as we have? The uſe that we are to make hereof is to be thankful, and fruitful in all holy Obedience, not to Deſpiſe, much leſs to Condemne others, who may be as dear in Gods account as our ſelves: for like as weighty Ears of Corne have been ſeen commonly to grow out of the compaſs of the tilled Feild, yea as Corne hath grown up abundantly without any Tillage at all, or any ſort of Husbandry beſtowed upon it (called therefore by People in all places ſelf-ſown) and rather than God will ſuffer his Family here on Earth to want, and his Glory thereby to be leſſened, he will feed them with the Corne of Heaven; ſo may God have a People dear unto him ſcattered abroad in the World without the Verge of his viſible Church, and the Seed of his Word, and Grace may without the uſe of ordinary means ſpring up in the Hearts of Men dwelling in the dark places of the Earth, though the way and manner of its ſpringing be beſt known unto himſelf, neither are we worthy to be of his Counſel in it.

We read of ſundry Perſons in Scripture, *viz. Job* and his three Friends, and *Jethro*, and *Naaman*, and *Cornelius*, with many more, who did worſhip the true God, having (for ought we ſee) ſmall means of true knowledg, beſides the working Spirit of a gracious

God

God that enlightned them, inclining their Hearts to a willing ſubmiſſion to his Law; which being ſo, have we not good reaſon to think (becauſe Gods Mercies fail not) the ſame of others in all the Generations that have been, and to hope the like of many more in the Generations that now are, and that are to come?

In ſhort, let a caſe be here put according to the common way of Arguing. A good King hath a care of all his Subjects without exception; his Protection reacheth to them all, they all have the Benefit of his Lawes, and if it lay in his Power, he would make them all Rich and happy, yea he would make them all Kings like himſelf, that ſo he might have the more Honour by their Subjection to him; though they for the generality of them keep themſelves low and beggerly by their want of Wiſdom, for the improvement of his Favour: In the mean time, he chuſeth out ſome to ſtand continually in his Preſence, to be his Nobles, Lieutenants, and Counſellours of State, while other are kept at a diſtance from him, that the Majeſty of his Peſon, and the Glory of his Kingdom might not be expoſed to contempt in the ſight of his Enemies, by their Sordidneſs and Simplicity; whom nevertheleſs when by their taking more ſpecial notice of his goodneſs, or, by his ſending his Son (*Incognito*) to make his Mind better known unto them (which he can and will do by his ſecret Inſtructions) they thereupon come to be wiſer, and more worthy of his Sight and Preſence, he will receive them all without any diſtinction into his Grace and Favour: but when any ſhall offend by breaking his Laws (who yet are but few in a well-ordered Commonwealth compared commonly with thoſe that are Loyal and obedient) he then maketh them to feel the Smart of his Diſpleaſure, ſome by condigne Penalties laid upon their Perſons and Eſtates, and other by ſuffering Death and Torture, according to the quality of their Offences.

Here is the caſe, and whether or no, the Circumſtances do ſuit well with our preſent matter in hand, I will leave to my Readers diſcretion, let him make the compariſon.

But ſeeing the Proverb often proves true, *viz.* *Longum iter per præcepta*, and we may add thereto, *per Comparata*, little good is to be done by telling men of Rules, or putting Caſes, let us further ſee what force there may be in an Example which if rightly applied will ſuffice to convince the upſtart Judges of this World, who are haſty to pronunce a Sentence of Eternal Condemnation upon a numberleſs Multitude of People, Men, Women and Children, and that before ſuch time as a Legal Trial hath paſt upon any of them, which

Ni ſapis exemplis deſipiendo ſapis.

is worſe than that we read of in the Pſalme, (which nevertheleſs is an abhorrency to all Fleſh) to murther the Widow, and the Stranger, and to put the Fatherleſs to Death.

It is an Example which God himſelf hath given of his Pitie towards a multitude of his poor Creatures in ſparing them, when the flaming Sword of his Juſtice was ready to conſume them, ſuch a wicked Crew they were whoſe wickedneſs was ſo great, that (as it is written of them) it came up before the Lord, I mean, the City of *Niniveh* (of which we read in the Book of *Jonas*) wherein were many hundred thouſand Perſons. My Argument intended from thence being this (which is, as we ſay, *A minori ad majus*) hath God ſhewed Mercy to a People becauſe they were many, ſo as to ſave them from a Temporal Deſtruction, *Certo certius* he will then upon the ſame account much more manifeſt his goodneſs to a greater number in delivering them from everlaſting Condemnation.

This Mercy will the more appear by a due Reflexion upon the Place and People, to whom it came: a People as much ſeparated from Gods Church, as any *Jewes*, *Turkes*, or *Pagans* are now: it was *Niniveh*, which was (as it is diſſected to my hand) *Niniveh* of the Gentiles, Uncircumciſed *Niniveh*, *Niniveh* of the *Aſſyrians*, Imperious, Inſolent, Intolerable *Niniveh*, *Niniveh* ſetled upon her Lees, not leſs than thirteen hundred years, *Niniveh* Infamous for Idolatry with *Niſroch* her Abomination, *Niniveh* with Idleneſs ſo effeminated and her Joynts diſſolved under *Sardanapalus* (as ſome conceive their thirty eighth Monarch) who ſate and ſpan amongſt Women, that as it was the wonder and by-word of the Earth, ſo the Heavens above could not but abhor it.

Yet is this *Niniveh* become the famous Subject of Gods Mercy, though the Prophet *Jonas* (being it ſeems poſſeſſed with the ſame bluſtring Spirit, which now haunteth us againſt thoſe that are Strangers unto us) was Offended, Vexed, Angry to the Death that it was ſo. But God, rich in Mercy, continues to be the ſame ſtill, his Compaſſions fail not, his Mercy appears in her full Luſtre and due Magnitude, when this mercileſs and angry Man was about to Eclipſe the Glory of it: for even then (which is a thing to be admired and adored by all the World) did God plead for it, and by Irrefragable demonſtration juſtify it againſt the perverſe diſputings of that Techy Opponent, for the ſaving of a numerous multitude old and young, who muſt otherwiſe have been utterly deſtroyed.

It will be ſaid, whats all this to the purpoſe? what? much every

very way, whether we conſider God himſelf, or thoſe ſinful People whom he ſpared.

Firſt, we ſee here how God delighteth in Mercy, Anger pleaſeth him not, and (as he hath elſewhere not only ſaid it, but ſworn it) that he will not the Death of a Sinner, much leſs (it may well be thought) of a numberleſs Multitude, to throw them Headlong out of his Sight promiſcuouſly into the Pit of Perdition. Now evident it is there were in that great City (becauſe God hath been pleaſed to give the number of them) more than ſixſcore thouſand Perſons that were young and harmleſs, young in reſpect of their Age, innocent in reſpect of their Lives, who knew not their right Hand from their left, not able to diſtinguiſh between good and Evil, and it may eaſily be gueſſed how great the number of other Ages was when there were ſo many Infants.

Theſe things conſidered we may here argue (as is before ſaid) from the leſs to the greater, if God will have Compaſſion upon ſuch a multitude of wretched Sinners, (whom he at firſt created after his own Image and likeneſs) partly becauſe of their great number, to ſave them from a bodily Deſtruction, yea and to plead ſo earneſtly againſt their Adverſary, who would gladly have ſeen the City flaming about their Ears, can we think but that he will much more ſhew Mercy to the Souls of a much greater Multitude, *viz.* of the greateſt part of the Children of men, to ſave them from the Vengeance of eternal Fire.

Unleſs we will ſay, which God forbid any ſhould ſay, that after this Life is ended, his Mercy is quite ſpent, clean gone from an innumerable company of precious Souls for ever, and that he will, contrary to his former wont, take delight in executing his Wrath upon them to the uttermoſt. Oh! far be it from us to judge ſo hardly of the God and Father of Mercies, or to think that he is like unto us mutable and inconſtant, one while kind and pitiful, another while cruel and unmerciful. The good Prophet will tell us in the *Pſalm* († 136) not once but many times for our greater Aſſurance, that *his Mercy endureth for ever*, and again and again that *his Mercy endureth for ever*, meaning that his Mercy in the full Latitude of it (which *non Obſtante* is without any Limits according to his own nature) endureth for ever.

It will I know be objected, whereſoever there is a true Repentance, there ſhall moſt certainly be a Remiſſion of all manner of Sin. But who can ſay that the Idolatrous Heathen, *&c.* wholly Ignorant of the way of Salvation, could or can poſſibly repent them of their Idolatries and other their Abominations? the anſwer

hereto

hereto is ready, who among us can ſay the contrary? true it is, if we look no further than our own common Experience will lead us, who muſt be limited to ſenſe in this caſe (as we are in all things that come within the Ken of our obſervation) we ſhall then be apt to make ſuch Concluſions. But as the Apoſtle argues (1. *Cor.* 2. 11.) *What man knoweth the things of a man, ſave the Spirit of man which is in him?* even *ſo the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.* Now the true and real Converſions of men are things beyond our reach, they are known only to him, who ſearcheth the Heart and the Reines, and it is not for us to take our Meaſure of the great God, according to the ſcantling of our narrow Nature in this or any other of the Works of his Grace.

God doth not, I ſay again, deal with men in their Converſion all after one ſort: look but upon theſe Ninivites (which is the thing we are here ſecondly to take into our Conſideration.

We ſee their Repentance was very ſudden, for as ſoon as *Jonas* had begun, the firſt day, to enter into the City, and had made his Proclamation, which God appointed him, publickly in the Streets of it, the People will not put him to the Toile of the other two days Journey, but generally beleived in God, and repented of their Wickedneſs, whereupon even aſſoon did God repent of the Evil that he ſaid he would do unto them, and he did it not. So for ought we know may there be between God and the Souls of men, who for the preſent are without God in the World, when they are to depart out of the World ſuch an Intercourſe of Grace on Gods part, and of Repentance on theirs which may open Heaven unto them, as much as our daily Converſation with God may entitle us to a Participation of it.

True it is, the Preaching of *Jonas*, though it was very ſhort, did as 'twere ſound an Alarm to theſe *Ninivites*, which did awaken them out of their ſinful Security, it being the means which God ordaineth to bring men to Repentance, and he will not digreſs from his own order, unleſs it be where time of Life is near upon the laſt Period, and thoſe means do fail; for in ſuch caſes, where there is no open Viſion, and the Days of mans appointed time are at an end, there doth free Mercy appear in her Eminency (as it did to the Theif upon the Croſs) God giving firſt the Grace of Repentance, and then Vouchſafing his favourable Acceptance of that Grace which he himſelf hath freely wrought in the Hearts of his poor Creatures, though it be by them but weakly exerted and performed.

We

We (alaſs) unprofitable Servants that we are, the beſt of us all, when we buckle to our Buſineſs, and with all diligence endeavour to work out our own Salvation (as we are warned) we muſt, being conſcious to our ſelves of our many failings in it, do it with fear and trembling, ever confeſſing it to be of the Lords Mercies, if we find any acceptance, and that we and our Works together be not at the laſt burnt in that Fire which ſhall never be quenched. Hear how St. *Paul* determines the Caſe (*Rom.* 9. 16.) *It is not* (ſaith he) *of him that willeth* (who hath only an inward deſire to pleaſe God by his Obedience, but doth not, or cannot produce it into act) *nor of him that runneth* (who doth the beſt he can in preſſing toward the mark, to obtain the Prize of eternal Happineſs) *but of God that ſheweth Mercy*, it is Mercy, Mercy only that is all in all from firſt to laſt in the Work of mans Salvation: and this hath ever been acknowledged by all (the Pelagian Hereticks only excepted.)

What elſe is the reaſon that when we ſee men among us live diſſolutely, and die it may be deſperately, eſpecially if they be of our neereſt Relations, or ſuch for whom we have had a more than ordinary kindneſs, we do not preſently account of them as curſed caſtaways, but are willing to ſuſpend our Judgment of them, as to their final Eſtate, though poſſibly we may have ſome fear of them, and be greived that they had no more care of their Souls before they died, what elſe, I ſay, is the reaſon hereof, but that in the multitude of our Thoughts within us at ſuch times, our Minds are overruled by the remembrance of Gods infinite Mercies? and I beſeech you, ſhould we not impartially have the ſame conſideration in us, when we reflect upon others that are Strangers unto us, in what place of the World ſoever they are? whom howſoever we ſlight, yet hath God a ſpecial regard unto them; for when he at firſt had ſelected his *Iſrael* to be a peculiar People unto him, even then he gave them a charge not to vex or oppreſs the Strangers, but to love them, as themſelves, *Ex.* 22. 21. And very often doth God, in the following Generations renew the ſame charge unto that his antient People: now we cannot but think this Charge hath a meaſure in it reaching to us under the Goſpel, which if it hath, and that we will not be partial (as is ſaid before) in judging Strangers more than thoſe deſperate ones among our ſelves, how can we ſo Poſitively determine of the major part of mankind, as we do, that they ſhall inevitably be thrown into Hell to be there Tormented for ever and ever?

If any who are yet tenaciouſly ſet upon this deſtructive Opinion

ſhall

ſhall accuſe me of Prolixity (as I think none elſe will) I hope my endeavour to refute this Errour will ſufficiently excuſe me among thoſe that follow the conduct of reaſon; who will be ready to ſay in my behalf, ſeeing ſo great an Errour hath prevailed ſo long among us, it is but neceſſary that much be ſaid in the Conviction of it. Sure I am St. *Auſtin* will be my advocate herein, *Non eſt multiloquium* (ſaith he) *quando neceſſaria dicuntur, quantâ libet Sermonum multitudine ac Prolixitate Dicantur.* I ſhall therefore take the liberty to proceed yet further in ſhewing the Irrationality, I may ſay the Impiety of this Soul-murdering Doctrine.

High time it is for us all to forbear judging the World at the rate as we have been wont, for we do not only condemn to Hell and everlaſting Death, thoſe whom (we may or ſhould have good hope to beleive) God hath ordained to eternal Life, but we do, in effect, ſpend our haſty and audacious Cenſures upon God himſelf, if he ſhall, contrary to our deciſion in this caſe, ſave thoſe whom we have marked out to Deſtruction; wherein we are ſomewhat like unto that Inſolent and Peremptory *Alphonſus* in *Spain*, who like a bold and Atheiſtical Fool ſpake of the Creation in this manner. If (ſaith he) I had ſtood by God when he had created the World, I could have directed him how to have ordered it better than he hath done: So ſhall we in our precipitant judging the World before the time, according to the common fancy that hath been among us, ſeem to preſcribe unto God what Courſe he ſhould take in his Judgment to come, and that he take care our Orders be punctually obſerved in it.

An Indignitie and contempt ſo hainous to be put upon the Wiſdom of the moſt high God, that it will be adjudged by the whole Creation an Impudency moſt Inexcuſable. And this we ſhall certainly find to our eternal Shame and Sorrow (unleſs we repent of it betimes, and learn to be wiſer) when we ſhall mourn at the laſt, and ſay, we Fools counted them miſerable, but now are they comforted, and we are tormented.

Two Examples ſhall be here taken out of holy Scripture (ſeeing that it is expected) of ſuch Perſons, (the one a Heathen, the other (probably) a Jew, but extraordinarily wicked) who had they been brought into our uſurping Phrontiſteries, before we heard they were acquitted by their own lawful Judge, we ſhould have paſſed a Damnatory Sentence of Death upon them, when notwithſtanding the Holy Ghoſt himſelf would have been their Compurgator.

The firſt is that Syrophenician Woman (whoſe Praiſe is in the

the Goſpel) ſhe was of the Canaanitiſh Extraction, and upon that account to be reckoned as a Dog, an Idolatour among the Phenicians, from whom many heatheniſh Abominations were ſpread into ſeveral parts of the World, and her Habitation there was (*In Finibus*) in the remote Borders of that Countrey, where unavoidably ſhe muſt be deeply ſowſt in the Dreggs of Ignorance and Infidelity. Yet even this Woman (ſo unlikely as ſhe was) during this her deplorable Condition, had her Name (we may well preſume) written in the Book of Life, and had alſo ſomewhat written in her Heart and Soul well pleaſing unto God, which did not outwardly appear, until Chriſt, to make her a publick Example of Gods abundant Mercy among the Heathen, was pleaſed to draw it out of her, by his Wiſdom; a Wiſdom ſurpaſſing that of *Solomons*, which he ſhewed in the caſe of the true Mother of the Child, that was brought before him.

It is like enough, ſhe had heard from ſome of *Tyre* and *Sidon*, who had been in *Jewry*, and had ſeen or heard the admirable Works, which *Jeſus* did (*Mar.* 3. 8.) or from the Jews who did trade into thoſe Parts (*Tyre* being a Mart which was much frequented) of the Fame of Chriſt's Power and Readineſs in healing Diſeaſes, and caſting out Devils, and of his deſcent from *David*, but ſhe her ſelf ſtirred not out of thoſe Coaſts, to hear the Doctrine of Salvation from him, or his Diſciples; and the Devil (probably) perceiving more in her againſt his Kingdom than men could (for he is a ſubtle inſinuating Spirit) had afflicted her more than the reſt of her Vicinity. Chriſt takes a long Walke from his own Countrey thither for her ſake (for as ſoon as he had done for this Woman that which he intended, he departed from thoſe Coaſts,) and being there, he entred into an Houſe (ſaith St. *Marke*) for he would have no man know it, but he could not be hid; however the end and purpoſe of his coming he did not impart unto any, only he himſelf knew what he would doe.

At length, this Woman hearing of him, ſhe makes her addreſs unto him, crying out, have Mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of *David*, my Daughter is grievouſly vexed with a Devil. But Chriſt anſwered her not a Word: Strange! Is he come ſo long a Journey for this purpoſe, to relieve a poor Woman, and will he now take no notice of her, not ſo much as ſpeak to her? he, who was wont to prevent others, asking them what they would he ſhould do for them, doth he now refuſe to ſpeak unto her that begged Mercy of him? When the Centurion (a Heathen alſo) beſought him for his Servant that was Sick, he preſently replyed, I

will come and heal him, and hath he now left his old wont? no such matter, his Silence here did speak his Wisdom, in bringing that to pass, which he intended; he answered her not a Word, and St. *Austin* will tell us why, *non ut negaretur Misericordia, sed ut desiderium accenderetur, nec solum ut desiderium accenderetur, sed ut humilitas Commenderetur, i,e,* not that he would deny her the Mercy which she desired, but that her Desire might be more fervent, nor that only her Desire might be more fervent, but that her Humility might be commended. Here then is Wisdom, not by his Word, as he deals with us, but by his Silence to bring forth that which he had designed to commend in this Woman, and that her Humility might appear to be a Legitimate Child of Grace which called God, Father.

Serm. de Tem. 74.

By his Wisdom he made the Heavens (saith the Psalmist) but he spake the Word then, and they were made, he commanded, and they stood fast; here, that the good Work which God, the great Spring and Fountain of all that good is, had secretly wrought in the Heart of this Heathenish Woman might appear to Gods Glory, and be extolled, he, at her first approach unto him speaks not a Word.

True, it is usual among men, out of Policy sometimes to forbear speaking, to try the Wit, or Valour, or Fidelity, *&c.* of those with whom we converse; but Christ our Lord and Master needed not to make such Experiments, for *he knew what was in man* (*Joh.* 2. 25.) he knew what this Woman had been, what she then was, and what she would be, yet is silent, that her continued Humility might be the more Famous and Exemplary, to the silencing (probably) of all those, who will be hasty to Judge and Condemn others, yet know nothing at all of what hath passed between God and their Souls.

Not to lose my self and my Reader in a large inquiry after all that we find written of this new Convert, that which remains shall be breifely drawn up together. Many were the Discouragments (as one hath summed them up) that her poor Soul digested. First, she was not answered by Christ. 2. She had backfreinds of his Disciples, who knew her not so well, as their Master did, and therefore would be rid of her because of her Importunity. 3. She was none of the Sheep that Christ would then regard (though he had other Sheep abroad, whom he was in time to bring into the Fold, *Joh.* 10. 16.) 4. She was a Whelp.

Alas he spake not to her at first, but now when he speakes, his Words are as Thunder and lightning to drive her from her hold.

Yet

Yet is ſhe not terrified with them, but faſtens upon Chriſt with her Prayers, as the Woman of *Shunem* upon *Eliſha* with her Hands (thus a good Divine makes the Compariſon) ſhe caught him by the Feet, and ſaid unto him, as the Lord liveth, and as thy Soul liveth I will not leave thee: ſhe wrought a Miracle by the Force of her Prayers, ſhe made both the Deaf to hear, and the Dumb to ſpeak, ſhe cryed to the Ears and Tongue of her Redeemer, *Ephata*, be ye opened, hear and anſwer my Petition, fulfill my requeſt. *Biſhop King upon Jonas.*

What followeth? ſhe won and obtained a notable Victory, for ſhe not only prevailed in her Suite, but was diſmiſſed with a ſingular commendation of her Faith from the mouth of Chriſt himſelf. *O Woman*, ſaith he, *great is thy Faith, be it unto thee even as thou wilt.*

Judge then, could this poor Greek, this Syrophœnician, this Canaanitiſh Woman (for all theſe Terms are put upon her in Scripture) be able to diſcerne a Power in Chriſt above that which is Humane, and with humble Proſtration, zealous Importunity, and invincible Confidence Parley, yea Struggle in this manner with him, and breaking through all Difficulties that lay in her way, carry her Cauſe in the end with Applauſe, enjoying her Deſire to the full? could ſhe, I ſay, have done all ſo ſucceſsfully, as ſhe did, had ſhe not been ſecretly inſtructed beforehand (or at that Inſtant) by a good advocate, the Holy Spirit of God (for where elſe could ſhe have it?) how to order and Sollicite her buſineſs to ſo good purpoſe?

An Example that Cleerely demonſtrates the powerful Working of Gods Grace towards ſuch as are without; for this being done to this Woman, why ſhould any man doubt but the like may be daily done (though in diverſe manners, as ſeemeth beſt to the Almighty worker) to many others in the ſame condition of diſtance from the Viſible Church? yea to Millions of Millions, as well as to one, they being all alike with us before God in reſpect of their Creation, and alike alſo in reſpect of their Apoſtacy in *Adam*, Divine Grace being likewiſe of ſo diffuſive a Nature, that we ſhould uſe it hardly, and do our ſelves no good, if we ſhould put a ſtop to the Current of it, otherwiſe than the Spring from whence it floweth will feed it, and ſend it.

Another Inſtance which we read in Scripture of Gods free Mercy to a great Sinner without the uſe of ordinary means, is the Penitent Theif upon the Croſs; he was, as St. *Luke* calls him κακοῦργος, a Malefactor, a worker or Artificer of Iniquity, one that

From Λεῖα Præda

made a Trade of Wickedneſs, a common Robber, ſo the Word Λῄστης uſed by St. *Matthew*, implyeth; one that ſpent his Life in making a Prey of all that he could catch by Fraud or Violence, yea and poſſibly by Murthering thoſe that came within his Reach: A great Malefactor (doubtleſs) he had been, as appeareth by the Death which he ſuffered; for this *ſervile Supplicium* (ſo Crucifixion was called) was not wont to be inflicted by the Romans (a generous Nation) upon any, but upon the baſer ſort of People, and ſuch among them, as were found guilty of notorious Offences.

But that which made him a worſe Malefactor than all his former Outrages had done, was (in my Opinion) that when Death was ready with cruel Torments to ſeize upon him, yet then did he revile the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, as he was hanging upon the Croſs near unto him: for thus ſaith St. *Mathew* and St. *Marke* likewiſe, *the Thieves alſo which were crucified with him caſt the ſame in his Teeth*, that is, upbraided him as the Jews had done: οἱ λῃσταὶ the Thieves in the plural Number, not contradicting St. *Luke*, who ſo writeth but of one of them, and that the other rebuked him for it (upon which ſeeming difference the Renegado *Julian* took his liberty to be *Julian* the Scoffer) but the old Rule is good, *Diſtingue Tempora et concordabunt Scripturæ*, let time be obſerved (without which there will unavoideably be confuſion in many things) and the Scriptures will not differ: It holds well in this caſe, both theſe Malefactors might at their firſt Crucifixion (looking upon Chriſt whom (poſſibly) they had never ſeen before, and hearing the Jews cry out, *he ſaved others, himſelf he cannot ſave*) caſt the ſame in his Teeth alſo. And of this might St. *Mathew* and St. *Marke* both give their Record, to the end that Gods Infinite Mercy might appear in the Converſion of one of them within a while after. For when the ſecret and powerful Operation of Gods Spirit had touched his Heart, after he had ſeen the extreame Wickedneſs which Chriſt's Adverſaries uſed towards him, how they gaped upon him with their Mouths like Ravening and Roaring Lions, and that he nevertheleſs, though half dead gave no anſwer to all their hard Speeches, but only prayed to his Father to forgive them, and him amongſt the reſt, then (as it is written of Saul (1. *Sam.* 10. 16.) when he had a Flaſh of Gods Spirit paſſing by him) he was immediately turned into another Man.

I Know well what ſence hath been wont to be given of St. *Matthews* and St. *Markes* Words to reconcile them to St. *Luke*. But becauſe we may here take a fair occaſion to extol the Goodneſs of

God

God in the Converſion of a Sinner (and no man ſhould indeed let ſlip ſuch an Occaſion) and becauſe nothing appears in the Words of the Evangeliſts compared together, that may give a Check to this conſtruction, but rather they ſeem to conſent thereto, I would for my part chuſe to underſtand the Senſe in the manner here declared for ſo good a purpoſe, as Gods Glory, than to make a difference where is none, and then compoſe it again by having a recourſe to our Rhetorick (wherein the aforeſaid Apoſtate *Julian*, well Skilled in ſuch learning could not be Ignorant) to borrow a Figure, which when we have made the beſt of it, will not in Reaſon be enough to ſtop the Cavills which Atheiſtical Scoffers will be apt with their wide Mouths to object againſt theſe moſt ſacred Oracles of Heaven.

But let it be granted that this Maleſactor was a Convert at the Hour of his Crucifixion, or, at the time when he firſt heard his fellow-thief revile our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, he himſelf forbearing then to uſe ſuch wicked Language; is it not ſtrange (though) that he who was but now attached for his many outrages by the Highway, had ſcarce ſhifted himſelf out of his diſguiſe, or waſht his Hands, it may be, from his bloody Murthers, at leaſt from his Rapine and Violence, ſhould now, when he was under moſt intollerable Pains, extended upon the Croſs, his Skin (poſſibly) all torn with Scourging, according to the Cuſtome, his Hands and Feet, for certain, pierced through with Nailes, the weight of his Body cauſing the Torment in thoſe tender parts to encreaſe more and more, when he ſaw Chriſt forſaken by his Diſciples (which might make him think that even they were afraid to confeſs him, or that they doubted he was not the Man he pretended to be) when he heard the Spectatours round about, eſpecially the Elders and chief of his Nation reviling him, is it not, I ſay matter of Wonder and Amazement that he ſhould now, all on a ſudden witneſs ſo good a Confeſſion, not fearing either Jews or Romans, or the Devil, whom he had ſerved all along, but God only? and that he ſhould now again practiſe his old Trade in a better and more commendable way, ſet upon Chriſt deſtitute of all viſible help and ſuccour, break through all, and take Heaven by Violence?

He could not with Patience endure to hear the Blaſphemies of his Companion, but rebukes him ſharpely, doſt not thou, ſaith he, fear God, ſeeing thou art in the ſame Condemnation? his meaning is, neither I nor thou have hitherto been kept in any Awe by the Laws of men, but we have tranſgreſſed beyond all the Bounds of Civility, unworthy therefore to live any longer among men in this

World,

World, but what, wilt thou not now fear God, now when thy Soul is ready to exhale itſelf out of thy Body? now, if ever, is a time for us to repent of our Wickedneſs when we are upon the very Threſhold of Death, and muſt inſtantly appear before the Righteous God, to give an account of our Prodigious Villanies.

And as he thus rebuketh his Fellow, ſo he Juſtifieth Chriſt againſt all the Calumnies of the Jews; he had nothing free about him but his Heart and Tongue, his Hands and Feet were ſo nailed to the Croſs, that he could not Worſhip Chriſt, as he would, with a humble and religious Incurvation. His Heart and Tongue therefore he will give up unto Chriſt, his Heart in a free and faithful Confeſſion of his Sins, in Sympathizing with Chriſt in his Miſery, not regarding his own though it was alſo moſt Intolerable, in applying Chriſts Merits to himſelf; his Tongue in proclaiming aloud Chriſts Innocency, this Man hath done nothing amiſs.

The Jews had Traduced Chriſt Blaſphemouſly Affirming that he was a Seditious Perſon, that he was a Blaſphemer, a Wine-bibber, *&c.* that he would deſtroy the Temple, that he made himſelf a King; this honeſt Confeſſor *e contra*, cryed out *Nihil indecens fecit*, he hath done nothing amiſs. A King, 'tis true, he is and hath a Kingdome which his Enemies ſhall find to their everlaſting Confuſion, when he ſitteth upon the Throne of his Glory, to judge them that have ſaid *Nolumus hunc regnare*, we will not have this Man to Reign over us; for thus he makes a Proteſtation of his Faith with a confident Reſignation of himſelf unto Chriſt, as his leige Lord and King, *Lord* (ſaith he) *Remember me when thou comeſt into thy Kingdom.*

O admirable Faith, O incomparable Faith! never was the like heard of, neither indeed could be, ſince the World began. This was the laſt Confeſſor that Chriſt had, while he was living in this World, but he outſtripped all thoſe that were before him, fulfilling that Word which was ſpoken by Chriſt, *viz.* The laſt ſhall be firſt: he was able (we ſee) by his Faith to remove Mountains of Oppoſition which lay in his way, that he might cleave unto Chriſt. It was a Faith I ſay again that ſurpaſſed all other that we read of in Scripture, a great Word, but by that time it be duly weighed, it will appear to be moſt true.

One of good Note in the Church makes the Compariſon in this manner: what is more worthy of Wonder and Amazement, than that a Theif ſhould have a better knowledge of Chriſt upon the Croſs than ſome of his Diſciples had, when they ſate with him at Supper?

Supper? that a Theif ſhould have a more eminent Degree of Faith than the Patriarch *Abraham* the Father of the Faithful, than *Moſes* the Servant of God, than the Evangelical Prophet *Iſaiah*, than his own Domeſtick Attendants, to whom it was given by a ſpecial Grace of Diſpenſation to know Chriſt, and the Myſteries of his Kingdom?

Abraham beleived in the Lord, but it was when he was ſo much honoured, as to have God himſelf to be his own Meſſenger, and to parley with him from Heaven. *Moſes* beleived in the Lord, but it was when he appeared to him in the midſt of a Fiery Buſh wonderfully. *Eſay* beleived in the Lord, but it was when he ſaw him ſitting upon a high Throne. The Apoſtles beleived in the Lord, but they were Eye-witneſſes how his Miracles poſed Nature, and all the Creatures did their Homage to him, as to their Creatour. Theſe were eaſie Taskes of Faith; but this noble Confeſſor beleived in the Lord, when which way ſoever he looked about him, his Eyes could meet with nothing but Horrour and Miſery. He doth not ſupplicate Jeſus ſitting at the right Hand of the Father, ſo he is crowned with Majeſty, nor unto Jeſus judging the Quick and Dead, ſo he is attended with Angells, *&c.* But when he ſaw his Sides, Hands, Feet all bleeding, his Face Ghaſtly, his Head drooping, and his Soul heavy to the Death, even then he ſaid to Jeſus, *Lord remember me when thou comeſt into thy Kingdome*; as if he had been lifted upon the Croſs to overlook Chriſts Debaſements, and to make a ſhew openly that his Faith ſhould outvy his Senſe.

But now it may well be demanded from whence hath this man this great Power? where did he learn all theſe things? not (ſurely) upon the Highway, not under Hedges, not in his Dens of Thievery, no, but it was given him from above, by the immediate Work of Gods Spirit, which breatheth where it liſteth, not diſcernable by men (*Joh.* 3 8.) And verily whatſoever hath been otherwiſe thought of this man (the things here premiſed being well conſidered) his Example alone may ſatisfie us that Gods Mercy is not limited either to time or means for the Salvation of thoſe whom he hath ordeined to eternal Life. Which being ſo, how can any man (I ſay again) be ſo peremptory as to conclude (and that againſt the very Nature of the Almighty and Merciful God ſo often and ſo fully made known to the Church in the Holy Scripture) that the greateſt Part of Mankind ſhall periſh eternally in the Torments of Hell without any Remedy?

Sed Obiter, let all men beware that they be not ſo unwiſe as to

loſe

loſe themſelves in this Comfortable Doctrine, which, though it be in Truth moſt Evangelical, yet I fear, as Grace can Work good out of Evil, ſo may the corrupt Heart of man by a Satanical Chimiſtry draw Evil out of Good, (as many wretched People have done by making an ill uſe of this Example of Gods Mercy to the Thief upon the Croſs.)

I do therefore deſire all that ſhall read or hear of this Doctrine of Salvation thus enlarged, to forbear their haſty and pernicious Miſconſtructions of it, till they have informed themſelves better by the Cautions that ſhall be here added unto it.

Now then, to ſumm up this whole matter.

Since the Holy Scripture, being rightly underſtood doth clearly ſpeak of a great Multitude which no man can number, of all Nations and Kindreds, and People and Tongues that ſhall be ſaved, but ſpeaketh no where ſo largely of thoſe that ſhall be Damned in Hell for ever, only ſaith, they ſhall be many.

If none of all the Churches of Chriſt in the Primitive times, and ſince to this very day, have in any of their publick Confeſſions, Creeds, and Atteſtations of Faith applyed any part of the Scripture to ſuch a Senſe in the leaſt Tittle and *Iota* of them, ſo as to condemn the major part of mankind to everlaſting Fire.

Since God hath accepted of that full Satisfaction, which hath been given to his Juſtice for the Sin of the World by the Blood of the Croſs, it being the Godhead of Chriſt which did put an infinite worth upon all that he did, and upon all that he ſuffered, the Obedience of God to the Rule of the Law ſufficing to juſtifie all ſorts of Sinners, of what quality ſoever they be upon the Face of the Earth, if they Repent and Believe, and the Blood of God given up to the Sentence of the Law, being as much as Divine Juſtice did expect for a full Satisfaction for the univerſal Breach of Gods Law throughout the World, from the beginning to the end.

If Faith and Repentance may be ſuddenly wrought by the ſecret Work of the Holy Ghoſt in the Hearts of men who are deſtitute of the ordinary means of Salvation.

If Divine Grace and Mercy be not limited during mans Life in this World to time or means for the Converſion of thoſe whom God hath choſen to eternal Life.

If God Governs the World (not according to the Model of our Imaginations, but) according to the good Pleaſure of his Will, and this Government be managed for the Glory of his great Name,

and

and for the general Good of thoſe that are in Subjection to him, and that certainly God will at laſt be Juſtified in his Government againſt the Malice of Hell (however the Sequel of it prove) and be clear when he is Judged.

If God takes no Pleaſure in the Death and Damnation of Sinners, but delighteth in ſhewing Mercy to the Children of men, and where there is but ſome Goodneſs (1. *Reg.* 14. 13.) as there may be in many that are without, he is well pleaſed with it, accounting ſuch not far from the Kingdom of God.

Finally if it will well become us to aſcribe unto our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, all the Glory that can well be imagined by us, and undoubtedly this will be a part of his Glory, that his Kingdom ſhall be much more enlarged than the Kingdom of his Enemy the Devil: For (as the wiſe Preacher ſaith, *Pro.* 14. 28.) In the multitude of People is the Kings Honour, and that this inveterate Enemy may not at laſt with Triumphant Exultations make his boaſt *Luctationibus robuſtis luctatus ſum et etiam palmam Tuli*, with great wraſtlings have I wraſtled againſt God and his Chriſt, and I have prevailed.

If, I ſay, theſe Principles be granted (as they muſt unleſs we will diſſolve all the Bands of Chriſtianity, only, I confeſs, I cannot be ſo poſitive in the ſecond) what ſhould be the reaſon that this Opinion hath ſo long been tenaciouſly maintained, *viz.* It is Decreed of God that the number of thoſe that ſhall periſh for ever in Hell, is much greater than the Number of thoſe that ſhall be ſaved in Heaven? It is (I muſt ſay) an Amazement to me to ſee and hear the Confidence that hath taken hold of many among us, in their buſie medling about this matter, affirming preſumptuouſly without Reaſon that which is infinitely beyond the Reach of men or Angels.

One Author there is of reverend Antiquity (whom I am not willing here to name) who is reported by a late Writer (*Ravanellus*) to give ſome reaſon for it, which indeed is comprehenſive of all that can be ſaid, though upon a diligent Search I do not find the Quotation agreeing with the pretended Original; the Words in the Apographon are theſe, *Ita eſt ut intelligeremus quid omnibus deberetur, atq; adeo ut inde liquidius conſtaret & quanta ſit Iræ dei erga peccatum & Peccatores, & quanta ſit ejus Bonitas & Clementia erga Electos, quæ eo pretioſior eſt quo paucioribus communicatur, ideoq; magis ab illis Agnoſcenda & Prædicanda, i, e,* ſo it is that we may know what we have all deſerved as our due, and that it may appear thereupon the more cleerly how great Gods Anger is againſt Sin

and Sinners, and how great his goodneſs and Mercy is to his elect, which, the fewer they be that are ſaved by it, is the more precious, and by them to be ſo eſteemed and proclaimed.

This is all which I, for my part, have ever read or heard to be alledged in this caſe.

But Judge I pray (for I appeal unto all men that are able to diſcerne.) Firſt, whether we may not much better attain to the knowledge of the juſt deſert of our Sins, in a way which will more directly give us a right underſtanding therein, and which we may be ſure is more according to the Rule that the Spirit of God hath ſet us, than in this way of Reflexion upon others who ſhall periſh in their Sins; though I ſay not but that this alſo may be ſometimes of good uſe, if it be with moderation conſidered as it ought to be (which I fear is but ſeldome among moſt People.)

But a way (doubtleſs) may be ſhewed unto us (if we would apply our ſelves aright to the uſing of it) which is more ſure and convincing: Firſt, the Conſcience which God hath ſet in every Mans Breaſt (as it is a faithful Monitor if it may be ſuffered to ſpeak, ſo it) is in ſtead of a thouſand Witneſſes againſt us all for our eternal Condemnation unleſs Mercy prevent it. And what man is there, I except not the Heathen, who doing by nature the things contained in the Law, ſhew the Work of the Law written in their Hearts (*Rom.* 2. 14. 15.) what man, I ſay, is there, let him be the moſt holy, moſt humble, moſt zealous man for Gods Glory that ever was in the World (except the Man Chriſt Jeſus) in whom this faithful Informer hath not at one time or other done his Office in this kind of accuſing and judging? Yea the better the Heart of man is, the more freedom hath it there to deal plainly in ſpeaking of the Wrath which is to come, as due unto all men for Sin.

2. Doth not the Written Word of God ſufficiently ſhew unto us in many other places of it, that all mankind hath deſerved to fall and periſh under this Wrath for ever? Is it not written, curſed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the Book of the Law to doe them? and is it not written alſo that in many things we offend all? Is it not written, all have ſinned and come ſhort of the Glory of God, and that even the beſt of us all are by Nature the Children of Wrath too as others are? But there is no need to multiply Quotations to this purpoſe, evident it is, the Holy Scripture doth frequently teſtifie the ſame Truth, that knowing the Terror of the Lord, we may be perſwaded by it.

Judge again in the next place whether Gods Anger againſt Sin

and

and Sinners hath not appeared infinitely more in the curſed and cruel Death of his only begotten Son, being thereby made a Curſe for the Sin of the World, than if he had in his juſt Indignation caſt the whole Race of mankind into Hell for ever; and ſhould not the Conſideration hereof alſo more work upon us, to make us ſenſible of Gods Anger againſt Sin and Sinners, than to talke unadviſedly with our Lips of a matter wherein we are totally ignorant, and which will in the end prove to be (rather than that which is here pretended) too bold an Intruſion into Gods Pavillion, a derogation alſo from Chriſts Merits, and a Diſhonour to the great Name of our God, to whom belong Mercies and Forgiveneſs, though to us, and to all men belongeth confuſion of Face for ever, becauſe we have rebelled againſt him.

But what a Word is this that followes, *viz.* Gods Mercy is the more Precious, and accordingly to be the more magnified, the fewer they are who ſhall be partakers of it, or, which is all one, becauſe but a few ſhall be ſaved.

If this be Evangelical (God be merciful to me) I am yet to learn (after ſo many Years teaching and ſtudying the Holy Scripture) what is the true Doctrine of the Goſpel of my Lord and Maſter Chriſt Jeſus. What, is it come to this? ſhall the Rich and ſuperabundant Mercy of God wherein we have truſted and triumphed all along, be thus ſtreitned? accounted the more precious, becauſe it reacheth but to a few? It grieves me to find ſo eminent a Leader in the Church, to be ſo reported of, as is here written of him, which to my apprehenſion (if it be true, and I am not willing to be too Inquiſitive) ſignifies that he hath let fall too foul a Blot upon his moſt excellent Workes, though, I confeſs, at firſt Sight, it did worke in me a ſuſpicion of my Judgment in this Point: but let that ſearching Fire of Gods Spirit try all our Workes of what ſort they are.

It is the manner of men (indeed) when Malefactors are to ſuffer according to their Demerits, to ſingle out ſome few by a Decimation, or otherwiſe as they ſhall pleaſe, to ſave them from the Puniſhment due unto them all, becauſe they would mingle ſome Mercy with their Severity, and the ſmaller the number is that are ſo ſpared, the Mercy is the more joyfully Embraced and applauded by them. But is this the manner of the Great and Good God, the Father of Mercies, who ſo delighteth in Mercy that he preferreth it above Sacrifice, not only the Sacrifices of his Law, but the Sacrifices of his Juſtice? (for of ſo large an Extent, I believe, may that Word of our merciful God be (*Hoſ.* 6. 6.) if we accor-

ding to our dear Saviours Advice (*Mat.* 9, 13.) learn aright what it meaneth.) Gods Ways we muſt ever remember, are not as our Wayes, nor his Thoughts as our Thoughts. It is therefore a thing both Odious and dangerous thus to fathom the profound Abyſſe of Gods Inſcrutable Judgments by our ſimple, ſilly, ſhallow Reaſonings, and by ſuch Compariſons (as that muſt be the only Ground of this Fancy) to level the everlaſting outgoings of his Glorious Attributes to his poor Creatures with our arbitrary Tranſactions among our ſelves, which however they may ſeem plauſible in the Eyes of men, they are but fooliſhneſs with God: The Mercy of God is ſo Infinite that no Affection in Nature, no Dimenſion or Proportion in the whole Creature hath been fit to expreſs it, as the Holy Scripture doth abundantly make manifeſt.

Neither in Truth, will this be the manner of thoſe who ſhall be ſaved from their Sins by this infinite Mercy, to account themſelves the happier becauſe they are but few, compared with them that ſhall (as it is ſaid) for ever Periſh in their Sins. It is a poor Exultation and unworthy of Glorified Saints, ſo to pleaſe themſelves in their Happineſs (as we here upon Earth do commonly in our petty Enjoyments) by ſuch oblique Reflexions, or to take the riſe of their Altitude in Heaven from the depths of Hell. A man ſhould rather think (charity being there in her utmoſt Elevation) that it ought to be ſaid of them, Gods Mercy is to them the more Precious becauſe there are but few of their own Blood and Kind that are excluded from it, for the Glory of his Juſtice (Few I ſay comparatively, for certain it is they will be many alſo that ſhall fall under the ſeverity of Gods Wrath for their Impenitency and Unbelief.)

It is the beatifical Viſion, in ſeeing God as he is, which workes in them a Conformity to God, beyond or without which Conformity they will never have the leaſt deſire in them to be happy at all, and particularly it is that which they ſee directly in God towards the whole Race of mankind which pleaſeth them infinitely, be it the cutting off of ſome from his Grace and Favour, and caſting them into Hell (though they ſhould be ſuch for whom we had an extraordinary Favour here in this World) or be it the ſaving of the reſt (both which they are equally delighted with, in reſpect of the end, as tending to Gods Glory) nevertheleſs becauſe they ſee Gods Goodneſs there in its Magnitude (of which they had heard but ſomewhat before) how great it ſhould be to the Children of men, their Joy will be the more enlarged, when they ſee this Goodneſs accordingly extended to the greateſt Number, whereby the Name and Merits of his dearly Beloved Son, and their dearly beloved

loved Saviour ſhall be the more exalted, and the Kingdom of his Enemy the Devil ſhall be ſubdued, and brought to a ſhameful Confuſion, after all the proud Inſultations that he had made of his prevailing.

In a Word, Let St. *Auſtin* be heard, *Secundum præſcientiam dei et Prædeſtinationem quam multi Oves foris? quid eſt quod dixi? quam multi Oves foris? quam multi Blaſphemant Chriſtum, credituri in Chriſtum? et hi Oves ſunt, verumtamen modo vocem alienam audiunt, alienos ſequuntur, &c.* according to Gods foreknowledge and Predeſtination, Chriſt hath many Sheep without, a ſtrange Word, but not to be recalled, Chriſt hath many Sheep without his Fold, where many blaſpheme Chriſt, yet may be perſwaded to believe in him, *&c.* and theſe are certainly Chriſts Sheep, though now they hear the Voice of a Stranger, and follow him, and ſtrange Gods likewiſe, *&c.*

Some few Cautions muſt be here added in the Cloſe, to prevent Miſtakes that may ariſe upon the preceding Diſcourſe.

Firſt let not this matter be ſo far prejudged that becauſe it differs from what hath been commonly preached among us by ſome of good worth and Eminency, and received for a Doctrine of Truth, it doth not agree with the publick Doctrine of the Church, or that it is a Phanſy only of the upſtart Sect of Holders forth of new Lights; that is far from me who here write of it, as it ſhould be from all, who in uprightneſs of Heart tender the Churches Proſperity. Neither am I the firſt who have aſſerted this Catholick Doctrine, nor am I alone at preſent in maintaining it, though, I confeſs, I have not ſeen or heard of any, that have ſingled out this Subject, to write of it at large, as is here done *Secundum menſuram Donationis Chriſti, &c.*

Much rather may it be ſaid, the contrary *Tenet* hath been a vain Phanſy grown up among ſeditious Sectaries, and by them obtruded upon the World, to ſtrengthen their Faction, by ſhutting up all Piety and True Religion within their Conventicles, and ſhutting out of Heaven all that will not joyn with them in their mad Vagaries, even in theſe our Days wherein this erroneous and unſcriptural Doctrine is with too much Zeal maintained, *viz.* That few ſhall be ſaved. We may ſee clearely that they who follow any kind of Sect, do for the moſt part conclude themſelves to be the only men, theſe are they that are ſtill harping upon this jarring String,

and

and preſs upon the World (not with fear and trembling which would better become them) but *tanquam ex Cathedrâ* with Pride and Inſultation, that few only ſhall be ſaved, ſo few, as if they had a Liſt of their Names, and could almoſt tell who they are.

Theſe (as a good Author hath of late written) ſtile themſelves the Brethren, the Beloved of God, his Choſen and dear Children, or, as the Term is now taken up and appropriated according to Phanſy, his Secret ones; drawing all Gods Promiſes to their own Fraternity, reprobating all others, and whatſoever is at any time ſpoken againſt them is ſpoken againſt God: theſe are ſo ſelfconceited that they confine Gods Mercy, like thoſe of *Donatus*'s Party to their own Acquaintance, ſo ſpiritually covetous, as if it would do them little Good to ſit in *Abrahams* Boſome, unleſs they ſaw many a *Dives* in H ll.

Hereto I ſhall add what our Learned and Holy Biſhop *Sanderſon* hath written in his third Sermon *ad Aulam* againſt this Phariſaical Arrogancy, *viz.* theſe aſſume to themſelves the Terms of Brotherhood, of Profeſſors, or Chriſtianity, the Communion of Saints, the Godly party, as if none but they were to be owned either as Brethren, or Profeſſours, or Chriſtians, or Saints, or Godly Men. Such an abhorrency hath this deſtructive Opinion wrought in the Minds of pious men that have been before us.

And as it is deſtructive to the eternal Eſtate of many precious Souls, ſo may it, eſpecially by keeping up theſe ſeparating Diſtinctions, tend to the overthrow of Nations and Kingdomes; we here in this Nation have reaſon ſo to account of it. Sure I am the ſaid good Biſhop did ſo long agone (being about fourty Years paſt) foretel in a manner the diſmal Breaches which have ſince ariſen among us thereby: his Words are theſe, *viz.*

Who knoweth of what ill Conſequence the Uſage of ſuch Appropriating and diſtinctive Titles may prove, and what evil Effects they may produce in future Times? But ſuch hath been our Miſery, we may now ſay, who knoweth it not? the Experience that we have had hath taught us ſufficiently to know it. And we cannot but know that the ſame dividing Spirit ſtill haunteth us in this Nation, as if we had known nothing, or at leaſt as if we had forgotten the woful effects which this Spirit of Diviſion and Deluſion hath produced.

But that I may not doe them wrong, theſe are not the only chief upholders of this Opinion, there is another ſort alſo that joyn with them, that is, the Romaniſts, both which (as the ſame Reverend

verend Biſhop hath compared them) are like *Sampſons* Foxes tied together by the Tailes, to ſet all on Fire, though their Faces look quite contrary wayes: and albeit the former ſort be too Phantaſtical and ſelfconceited, yet may theſe latter likewiſe well be adjudged, as they have been, too Fanatical. Do not theſe make their Church, the only Suburbs of Heaven, maintaining expreſly that none can enter therein but only thoſe that will paſs through their Gates, which in truth are too narrow for any, yea for themſelves to enter? They, contrary to all Truth and Reaſon make the Roman and the Catholick Church Termes convertible, exacting eternal Communion with them, and Subjection to their Biſhop as a condition ſo eſſentially requiſite for the qualifying any Perſon to be a Member of that Church of Chriſt, out of which there is no Salvation, as that they have inſerted a Clauſe to that purpoſe into the very definition of a Church, *viz. Eccleſia eſt cœtus hominum ſub regimine Legitimorum Paſtorum, ac præcipue unius chriſti Vicarii Romani pontificis.* Whereby they do in effect adjudge all that are not under the Popes Juriſdiction and Government to everlaſting Perdition.

And now, I beſeech you, are not both theſe ſorts of People miſerably deluded by Satan, that whereas they ſpeak of the Strait Gate and narrow Way that leadeth unto Life, and that they have found it, yea that they are the only Guides to all others that deſire to find it? they themſelves both one and the other are extreamly miſtaken in their way, which, without Repentance they will undoubtedly find in the end to their everlaſting Confuſion.

This Opinion therefore having ſuch Authors and Abettors, and producing ſuch pernicious Effects to the overthrow not only of Chriſtian Charity, but of Humanity alſo, yea to the leſſening, if not utter annulling of Gods infinite Goodneſs (for, beſides what Papiſts fooliſhly boaſt of the Church of *Rome*, that there can be no Salvation out of it, I have heard a prime Leader among our Nonconformiſts Preaching in his Pulpit before a great Congregation in this manner, what cares God if he throwes the greateſt part of the World into Hell?) and being, as it appears, without any expreſs Warrant from Holy Writ, it ſhould, to ſpeak modeſtly, be the leſs regarded by us, though it hath been, and ſtill is countenanced by thoſe that have been, and are at this day of good eſteem among us.

A ſecond Caution ſhall be this, let no man miſtake ſo far, as to imagine that this preceding Diſcourſe doth aim at any wider way that leadeth to Life, than the Holy Scripture, and the Church following the Rule of it, will allow. The way is plain which is ſet

before

before us, *viz.* Jesus Christ, and he whosoever he be, Christian or Heathen, that will with Faith and Repentance keep stedfastly in this way, looking upon Jesus to the last Gasp, he shall undoubtedly be saved: but no other of what Nation, Rank or Condition, or Perswasion soever he be shall ever be interested in this Mercy.

Should I here maintain, as an eminent Author of late hath Published in a Book called *Theologia Veterum*, that the Heathen by the light of Nature without Christ may attain to such a Knowledge of God, as is enough for their Salvation, or as some of the Antients even in the primitive Times of the Church (as our Bishop *Mountague* reports of them in his Acts and Monuments of the Church before Christs Incarnation, *Cap.* 1. *S ct.* 86.) have held that the Heathen by following only the Rules of Philosophy may be saved, and that Philosophy was necessary to Justification, not alone antecedently by way of Assistance in promoting or furthering saving Knowledge, but properly, Primarily, and of it self; (these are the Words of my Author, the said Bishop) or should I say, as others in these times, that the sweet Disposition of good humoured men (worthy indeed of all to be beloved) is enough to commend and approve them unto God, and bring them to Heaven, I may justly fall under the premised Censure, though my adherence to such Opinions would have added some Strength to my premised Position.

or by *Ethica Justitia.*

Dr. *Montagut.*

But for my part, the Sense of my good Mother the Holy Church of England shall, next to the Holy Scripture, be my Guide herein, and she in the eighteenth Article of our Confession entitled to eternal Salvation only by the Name of Christ, thus beleiveth.

They are to be held as Cursed, who presume to say, every man shall be saved by the Law or Sect which he professeth, so that he be diligent to frame his Life, according to that Law, and the Light of Nature, for the Holy Scripture doth set out unto us, only the Name of Jesus Christ whereby men must be saved.

Thus hath the Church given Judgment in this case, and thus do I hereupon affirm that where there is nothing of Christ, no Interest in him by Faith, nor no Influence from him by his Spirit, there can be no Salvation. St. *Austin* is very punctual herein, *Qui cuiquam promittit salutem sine Christo, nescio utrum ipse salutem habere possit in Christum, i, e,* whosoever he be that promiseth Salvation to any without Christ, I question

Serm. de verb. dom. cap. 4.

queſtion, whether he himſelf may ever be ſaved by Chriſt.

A modern Divine renders it thus, as all the Stars ſhining together in the Firmament do not make Day, it is the Light of the Sun only can do it; ſo all the Sweetneſs that can be found in corrupt Nature, and all the Virtues that have been famous in the Heathen, are of themſelves defective in point of eternal Salvation, it is an Honour peculiar to Chriſt alone to bring it to paſs.

True it is, the Mettle of theſe Virtues and Sweetneſs is very good, but if they totally want the Image and Superſcription of Chriſt upon them, they will never paſs for currant before almighty God. Only, I ſay ſtill, the way, and manner, and time, and meaſure of this Signature is in the Hand of God, neither are we to be ſo bold, as to ſet Bounds thereunto, or to border out the Kingdom of God, and the many Manſions in it to a few particular Favourites of our own, according to our Fancies. The Lord knoweth them that are his (ſaith the Apoſtle, 2. *Tim.* 2. 19.) we know them not; this is his Seal whereby at all times and in all places far and near he marketh them he hath appointed to Salvation, their Names are written in the Lambes Book of Life, which is laid up *in Archivis*, that is in his own Cuſtody far beyond our Reach.

Only this we know, Faith and Repentance (as it hath been here often ſaid) muſt be wrought in the Hearts of Men, before they can be capable of Gods Mercy in the ſaving of their Souls; but how they are wrought there at all times is a Miſtery unknown to us. Clouds and thick Darkneſs are about the Pavillion of God, let not ſilly man then dare to Remove them.

To conclude this particular (Biſhop *Mountague*) whom I mentioned before hath written at large very learnedly concerning this Subject, proving even againſt *Juſtin Martyr*, *Clemens Alexandrinus*, *Epiphanius*, St. *Chryſoſtome* and others the good Servants of God (who had, it ſeems, imbibed this Erroneous Opinion of the Salvation of the Heathen, that the Heathen who excelled in Moral Virtues did not, could not attain Eternal Salvation without Chriſt; neither was he alone in maintaining this fundamental Truth, but had as it appears, St. *Auſtin* to joyn with him in ſeveral places of his Workes.

At length he ſhuts up that his elaborate Diſcourſe in this manner. Since *Pelagius* and his Sectaries undertook againſt the Grace of God in Chriſt, the Value, Force, and extent thereof, it hath been more exactly canvaſſed and more perſpicuouſly cleered, and ſo more generally received than formerly, *viz.* that the Knowledge

of Christ to be sent, and to come into the World as a Mediator, Redeemer, Saviour of Mankind, was of absolute necessity to Salvation in some Degree or other more or less, in all Ages and times, since *Adam* recovered after his Fall, and had that Promise of Grace made unto him, *viz.* the Seed of the Woman shall break the Serpents Head.

A third Caution which even plain necessity requires should be here also inserted (though somewhat of it is given before) is to warn all those whom God hath Chosen to be a People (like his Israel of old) near unto him, and among whom he vouchsafeth to record his name, I mean, such as have been by the Sacrament of Baptism solemnly admitted into the Household of Faith, which is his Church, that they beware how they take occasion herehence of slacking their Zeal in his Service which he hath required of them, and to which they have devoted themselves.

For (as *Moses* tells *Aaron*, *Lev.* 10. 3.) *God will be sanctified in them that come nigh unto him, and before all the People he will be glorified*; So let us also consider, it is no small Privilege that is granted to us, to be culled and called out of the Wilderness of this World, where we were desolate and forlorn, to come and dwell in the House of God, to see his goings in the Sanctuary, to hear the joyful Sound, the Sound of his Gospel, his Holy Name and Praises in our Assemblies and Congregations, to be under his continual Care of Instructing us, of protecting us, of providing for us: a mighty engagement therefore lieth upon us to walk worthy of his Grace, to be Holy as he is Holy in all manner of Conversation, and to give all Diligence that the more manifestations we have of Gods Presence with us, we encrease the more in Holiness, in Knowledge, and in Zeal for Gods Glory. Otherwise, if we prophane the Holy Name of our God, by a negligent and perfunctory discharge of our Duty in any kind, we shall certainly provoke his Displeasure against us.

But if any among us, calling upon the Name of the Lord shall upon this account of Gods infinite Mercies towards the major part of mankind, presume, instead of departing from Iniquity, to take the more Liberty to themselves in fulfilling their own ungodly Lusts, hoping that they may notwithstanding at the last get into Heaven in the Throng, as the usual Word is, they shall without a speedy Repentance, undoubtedly find to their everlasting Woe and Sorrow, that it shall be more tolerable in the Day of Judgment for the Heathen than for them. For then (as we read in the Gospel, which may have a Reference hereto) *many shall come*

from

from the East, and from the West, and from the North, and from the South, and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the Kingdom of Heaven; but the Children of the Kingdom (observe it, such as have been so degenerate, as to make themselves by their unnatural Rebellions against their good King and reiterated Disobediences to his Law unworthy of this Honour and Happiness) *shall be cast into outer Darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of Teeth.*

It is a Resemblance which the Holy Ghost useth in Scripture, *viz.* as the Ground which is well manured should (according to expectation) pay for the Pains and Cost which is bestowed upon it, by yeilding somewhat a proportionable return to them, by whom it is dressed, and it shall thereupon receive blessing from God, to make it more Fruitful, but if it beareth Briars and Thornes, it is rejected (accounted a reprobate Piece) and is nigh unto Cursing, whose end is to be burned (*Heb.* 6. 8.) Ἀδόκιμον Right so will it be with that People, who are Gods Husbandry, such whom he hath in his abundant Goodness severed from the wild and waste Desart of the World, and made as a Garden enclosed for his Delight and Solace, planting and watering and fencing it about with a Wall reaching up unto Heaven, that is, protecting it from Forein Incursions, and casting out the Stones, that is, freeing it from annoyances within; If now it bear Fruit, well, the end shall be everlasting Life, it shall be a Paradise of Pleasure unto God for ever.

But if after all is done, it will, instead of sweet Hearbs, which are the Fruits of the Spirit (such as the Apostle writeth of *Gal.* 5. 20.) bring forth nothing but rotten, filthy, noisom Weeds of Sin and Wickedness, the Fruits of the Flesh, odious and abominable in the Sight of God, disappointing his Expectation, and frustrating all the Labour and Charge that hath been spent upon it, what remaineth for such but a certain fearful looking for of Judgment and fiery Indignation burning to Hell? yea more Fewel shall be added to their Tophet to make their Torments greater in that bottomless Pit, than shall be to theirs, who never had the Dewes of Heaven, nor the Fatness of Gods Earth, that is, neither the Influences of Gods Spirit upon their Hearts, nor the fertile Operations of his Word in their Ears to make them fruitful.

This will be the woeful lot of all careless and presumptuous Wretches, who having the Light of the Knowledge of the Glory of God shining round about them, yet will love Darkness rather than Light: This is and shall be the Condemnation, the damning

Sin above all other, which will ſink men deepeſt into Hell, for the Mouth of the moſt righteous Judge hath ſpoken it. Yea once and twice hath it been pronounced by him, *He that knew his Lords Will, and prepared not himſelf, neither did according to his Will ſhall be beaten with many Stripes, but he that knew it not, and did commit things worthy of Stripes, ſhall be beaten with few Stripes, Luke* 12. 47. 48.

Joh. 3. 19.

And who will not now ſay, good Reaſon it ſhould be ſo? for when by the Preaching of the Goſpel men have heard of the cruel and numberleſs multitude of Stripes which Chriſt endured for them, and have been ſufficiently convinced that with his Stripes they may, if they will, among other poor Sinners, be healed (as the Prophets word is) find ſpiritual Health, everlaſting Life and Salvation, yet theſe Stripes, and Wounds, and Bruiſes too of the moſt tender Virgin-Body of the Son of God are made of no account with them. Is it not juſt and meet they ſhould more than other, who never heard of Chriſt, fall under the Laſh of Gods Wrath, and be made to feel the Stripes of his incenſed Juſtice among Devils, with whom they ſhall have, according to their Deſerts Stripes above meaſure? for *unto whomſoever* (ſaith Chriſt again) *much is given, of them ſhall be much required*, meaning according to that Degree of Knowledge, God hath afforded to any, ſo ſhall their Crimes receive aggravation of Guilt and increaſe of Puniſhment, and the more Light and Grace God vouchſafeth to any People, the greater Diligence in his Service will be expected.

Which manner of dealing is commonly to be ſeen among our ſelves, for ſo it followeth in our Saviours Words, *viz.* to whom men have committed much, of them will they expect and ask the more: But if they fail in their Truſt, do we not account them worſe Enemies unto us, than thoſe in whom we have put the leſs Confidence, yea or than thoſe that deal injuriouſly with us, whom we never truſted?

The holy Prophet in the Pſalm makes his Complaint to ſome ſuch Purpoſe, ſaying, it was not an Enemy that reproached me, then I could have borne it (meaning I could have borne it more patiently) neither was it he that hated me that did magnifie himſelf againſt me, then I would have hid myſelf from him (I could have prevented it more eaſily) but it was one whom I had obliged, one that pretended much Kindneſs likewiſe unto me, one who had made a ſhew of Piety, and who joyned with me in going to the Houſe of God, one to whom I had opened my whole Heart and Soul, made him my Guide and my Counſellour; this was it, it ſeems, that

moſt

moſt grieved him. And as the well known Story reporteth of *Julius Cæſar*, this was it that ſtruck him to the Heart more than all the Stabs that were given him in the Senate-Houſe, when he ſaw *Marcus Brutus* to be his Enemy. A cold Wind from the South whence refreſhing and pleaſant Gales are expected is intollerable, ſo where a kind requital for Love is due, there to meet with Ingratitude, is a thing moſt odious in the hearing of all men, and he that ſhall ſo offend though in other things he may be excuſable, yet for this alone he will be judged as one unworthy of the Sight and Preſence of all mankind.

Etiam tu Brute?

Ingratum ſi dixeris omnia dixeris.

Is this then the manner of men to be more ſenſible of Injuries done by Perſons endeared and obliged, than of thoſe that are done by Enemies or Strangers? do we expect from one another Love for Love, abhorring thoſe that are Ungrateful? and can we think (for a Compariſon in this caſe may hold very well) that the Jealous and Righteous God, when he vouchſafeth his gracious Preſence to thoſe that are in Covenant with him, daily loading them with his Benefits to the end they may ſerve him without Fear in Righteouſneſs and true Holineſs, that he will endure to be ſleighted by them whom he hath ſo much obliged? that he will ſuffer with Impunity his Royal Law to be made Void, his Ordinances, which are the Glory of his Kingdom, and the moſt clear demonſtrations of his Grace and Goodneſs to the Children of men in this World to be deſpiſed? Will he be partial in Judgment by giving a connivance to us in our Sins becauſe we are in Covenant with him? no doubtleſs, he will never do it, it will be too great a Diſhonour to him in the Face of the World, yea he ſhould annihilate his very Nature and Eſſence, for take away his Juſtice, and his *Being* is *ipſo facto* diſſolved. Neither would the Merits of his Son be a *Salvo* herein unto him, unleſs Faith and Repentance do both together, in due time enter their Plea for us againſt the Accuſations of the Law: which Plea ('tis true) will (according to what is before ſaid) be received without a Demurrer: but it is very rare in ſuch preſumptuous Deſperadoes, who have in their Jollity made Mercy it ſelf a Mockery, and wickedly abuſed that Goodneſs which would have led them to Repentance.

It concerns us then to look well about us, that we be not deluded with this Satanical Sophiſtry, ſo as to ſay in our Hearts becauſe we are in Covenant with God, we ſhall have Peace, though we walk on in the Imaginations of our Hearts, adding Iniquity unto Iniquity; for dreadful are the Threatnings that are gone out of the Mouth

of

of the Lord againſt this bold Preſumption. And we cannot but know, it hath been Gods uſual wont when he entreth into Judgment to be ſo far from partiality that he commonly begins with thoſe of his own Houſe. *You only* (ſaith God) *have I known of all the Families of the Earth, therefore will I puniſh you* (*firſt*) *for your Iniquities.*

1. Pet. 4. 17. Jer. 25. 18. 29. Amos 3. 2.

In ſhort, upon the whole matter let it be conſidered, how horrid a Preſumption it is, and how near to that great Sin which is unpardonable, for ſuch as we who are the Baptiſed of the Lord, who have taſted the good Word of God, and the Powers of the World to come, for us, I ſay, to encourage our ſelves hereupon in any evil matter whatſoever, what is this but to do deſpite to the Spirit of Grace to crucifie to our ſelves the Son of God afreſh, and to put him to an open Shame?

A fourth Caution that ſeems here fit to be entred, in few Words is this, though Gods Mercy in the Salvation of the World is not to be limited to ſuch as are publickly called by his Name, but may be, and is often extended to others that are Strangers unto him, yet ſhould not this be an hinderance to any who ſeek and endeavour the Converſion of thoſe that are without God in the World: but as Divine Providence ſhall lead them, or any of us to ſo good a Work, it is our Duty to undertake it for the enlargement of Chriſts Kingdom amongſt men, which will be the advancement of his Glory, that he may Rule here in the midſt of his Enemies, and that from the riſing of the Sun, to the going down of the ſame, that is, from the Eaſt *Indies* (as they are now called) to the Weſt his Name may be great among the Heathen, as the Lord himſelf hath ſpoken it, *viz. Mal.* 1. 11.

In the firſt place, let not this preceeding Diſcourſe of the infinite Mercies of God to his poor Creatures fall under a Prejudice, becauſe ſome other few Texts of Scripture that ſeem to contradict it, have not been here withal taken into Conſideration: The plain Truth is, it was needleſs to intermeddle with them in this caſe, not becauſe they are but few, being but one or two at the moſt, for I confeſs there is not any part of the written Word of God, but is of greater excellency than the Sun in the Firmament, and therefore ſhould not be ſlighted by us. Yet ſeeing they are but few, it may thereupon be well ſuſpected that the Senſe of them, as to this great matter, hath been miſtaken; for why, it is more than probable that if God had Decreed the major part of mankind to eternal Perdition, the Scripture wherein God hath revealed his whole Mind concerning our future Eſtate after this World would have given

given ſome cleer Light to the Church by a frequent intimation of his everlaſting Decree and Purpoſe herein, that ſo knowing perfectly the Terrour of the Lord, we might all be perſwaded by it, and rouſed up out of our ſinful Security, to give all diligence to make our Calling and Election ſure.

But no ſuch matter is Revealed unto us (there being enough beſides written in Scripture to thoſe ends) for as for thoſe other places of Scripture, which are and have been inſiſted upon, I doubt not but it ſhall be here made evident that they are miſtaken.

Firſt that Word which our Saviour ſpake, *Luk.* 12. 32. *viz. Fear not little Flock, it is your Fathers good Pleaſure to give you the Kingdom.* Herehence it is commonly ſaid, doth Chriſt call his Flock a little Flock, and ſhall not we call it ſo too? Yes, God forbid that we ſhould call it otherwiſe; if he meant it of his whole Church throughout the World (as it muſt be confeſſed that only is his Flock, which he takes care of, in watching over them, in feeding them, in defending them, in reſcuing them when through their going aſtray they fall into Danger) is but little in compariſon of thoſe that are wandring about in the wild and deſolate Wilderneſs of the World, if ſo, I ſay, this Conceſſion will not neceſſarily infer ſuch a Concluſion as hath been wont to be imagined, from it, for Chriſt hath other Sheep in the World, ſuch as we know not of, whom he will, as he ſaith, bring into his Fold, when thoſe that come in laſt ſhall be preferred before the firſt, at which time this terme of little Flock, in reſpect of number is not to be appropriated to it, for then ſhall they be as the Stars of Heaven for multitude, and as the Sand of the Sea that cannot be meaſured nor numbered.

But this Senſe of our Saviours Words in this place concerning the univerſal Church, is but an hypothetical Conjecture, that which is more certain is this. Chriſt here ſpeaks to his Diſciples only, who were at that time his conſtant attendants and his peculiar Care, whom he had taken into his own Tuition and Charge, and accordingly did make Proviſion for them during all the time that they followed him; and though they were encompaſſed about with Danger by reaſon of their Attendance upon him, and ſhould after his departure from them meet with much Trouble, yet he bids them not fear, for they ſhall have a full Reward given them, it is (ſaith he) the Fathers good Pleaſure to give you the Kingdom; where (as it is promiſed them, *Mat.* 19. 28.) they ſhould ſit upon twelve Thrones Judging the twelve Tribes of *Iſrael.* Signifying

ing (as a good Writer renders the Senſe) ye that are now my Diſciples, have conſtantly followed me and continued with me in my Temptations, leaving all for my ſake, ye ſhall aſſoon as I come to my Kingdom be highly honoured and rewarded by me, and not only ſo, but in the new Age and State which is to come here in this World after my Aſcenſion, when all things ſhall become new, you ſhall have a Power in the Church Inſtated on you, as my Succeſſours, ſomewhat proportionable to that of the ſeveral Rulers of the Tribes among the Jews: to this purpoſe alſo is that Promiſe which he made them, *Luk.* 22. 29. *I bequeath unto you a Kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me, that ye may eat and drink at my Table in my Kingdom, and ſit on Thrones, &c.* that is, that you be next unto me, and have at my departure the Power of Governing the Church, which was actually fulfilled in all places whereſoever the Kingdom of Chriſt was ſet up by the preaching of the Goſpel.

Theſe things conſidered, the aforeſaid Word of our Saviour concerning his Flock, calling it little, cannot be meant of the number of Gods Elect all the World over ordained to Life Eternal, as it hath been miſinterpreted by ſome too long a time.

Nor doth the Holy Scripture intend any ſuch Senſe of Gods Eternal Election, where it is ſaid *many are called, but few are choſen. e.g.* in *Mat.* 20. 16. Theſe Words are written, but evident it is they refer only to the Parable beforegoing, in which they that went laſt to Work in the Vineyard are made equal with the firſt who had born the Burden and Heat of the Day, and this is rendred as a Reaſon of it, for many are called, but few are choſen, ſignifying that whoſoever have the Reward it is not for the Works ſake, but it is in the Lords Choice whom he will prefer, and vouchſafe his ſpecial Favour unto, in the diſtributing his Reward. And that which we are to learn herehence is, God hath his ſpecial and choice Favourites among his beloved People, to whom he openeth his Mind more freely than he will unto others: the Apple of the Eye (as one makes the Compariſon) is dearer unto a man than the whole Frame and Circle about it, the Signet upon the right Hand in more regard, either for the Matter or for the Form, or for the Uſe whereto it ſerveth, than all his other Ornaments, a writing in the Palmes of his Hands more carefully preſerved than all his other Papers and Records. Doubtleſs there are ſome few amongſt the reſt of their Brethren, whom God doth tender as the Apple of his Eye, weare as a Signet upon his Finger, engrave as a writing in the Palmes of his Hands, and with whom is the Secret of the Lord, and his hidden Treaſures. St.

St. *Paul* was a choſen Veſſel to bear the name of Chriſt before the Gentiles, *&c.* (*Act.* 9. 15.) above the other Apoſtles, and according to his Election he laboured more abundantly than they all did, yet were they all the called of the Lord, and intereſſed in one and the ſame Hope of their Calling. St *John* was the beſt beloved Diſciple of Chriſt, and might lean in his Boſom, yet had the reſt of the Apoſtles the privilege to ſit with him at the Table. And did he not prefer *Peter* and the two Sons of *Zebedee* (whereof the ſaid *John* was one) when he led them apart into a Mountain, to make them Eye-witneſſes of his Transfiguration, *Mat.* 17. 1.? And after that in chuſing the ſame men from the reſt of their fellow Apoſtles to keep him company, and to watch with him when he was in his Agony, overwhelmed with Sorrow?

Yea, even here in this Parable, are not thoſe that came in laſt to work in the Vineyard, as much favoured as thoſe that had been there before them? the Labourers indeed took Offence thereat, but the good Houſeholder, who is God himſelf, juſtifieth his own Act againſt their cauſeleſs Exceptions, aſſerting his Liberty to do what he will with his own; neither is there any Wrong done to them, though he prefers one before another, ſo long as the firſt as well as the laſt, have a full Reward given them. As at a publick Dole a multitude may be called to it, but it lieth in the Breaſt of the charitable Donour to diſtribute it as he pleaſeth, poſſibly to ſome few whom he chuſeth out he may be more liberal than he is to the reſt, and no man may ask him why he doth ſo? Even thus will God diſpoſe of his Bounty to his poor Servants, as ſeemeth good unto him, (without rendring an account to any, which cannot juſtly be required of him) to give unto the laſt that entreth into Covenant with him (though they doe him but little Service) as he giveth to the firſt who had been labouring all the day, yea to ſet the laſt before the firſt, and the firſt after the laſt, that it may appear it is not, as hath been before ſaid, for the Works ſake (which the Jealous God doth much diſdain) that his Goodneſs is more enlarged to ſome few, but that whatſoever Favour is ſhewed either to one or other, it is Grace and Grace alone that they have it vouchſaf'd unto them; for why? God will never endure that any man ſhould boaſt in his Preſence, (to which we are all for the moſt part very apt.) Upon this account St. *Paul* expreſly Diſavows it, *not of works*, ſaith he, *leſt any man ſhould boaſt*, *Eph.* 2. 9.

This I take to be the true Senſe of this Scripture, and ſo is it of the other where the ſame words are uſed *Mat.* 22. 14.

The ſixt and laſt Caution that ſhall be here put in, is this, *viz.*

whereas it is written, *Wide is the Gate and Broad is the Way that leadeth to Deſtruction, and many there be that go in thereat, but Strait is the Gate and Narrow is the Way that leadeth unto Life, and few there be that find it*, the meaning whereof hath certainly been much miſtaken, yet I ſay not, but that theſe Words carry in them ſuch a Senſe, which may and will, being rightly conſidered, rouze us all up out of our carnal Security, and make us fall to our Work, *viz.* the working out of our own Salvation, as with fear and trembling, ſo with all Care and Diligence, and to ſtrive according to our Saviours Warning (*Luk.* 13. 24.) *with all our might to enter in at the Strait Gate*, for without doubt, though they ſound terribly, yet is there an Evangelical Truth in them, ſuch as hath been before declared, but to hold that our Saviour ſpake them Dogmatically, as if it was ſo decreed of the Father from Eternity that few ſhould be ſaved, for my part I can by no means conſent unto it; for what would that ſignify but that he did Preach Condemnation to the major part of mankind? Which Doctrine certainly could not well agree with the Anointing which he had from the Spirit of the Lord God (*Luk.* 4. 18.) nor with the Commiſſion which he had received from the Father, for *God ſent not his Son into the World to condemn the World, but that the World through him might be ſaved*, (*Joh.* 3.17.) and accordingly he ſaith, *I came not to judge the World, but to ſave the World* (*Joh.* 12. 47.)

Nevertheleſs it is as true that to the Unbelievers and Impenitent, ſuch as were the Scribes and Phariſees who traduced his Perſon, deſpiſed his Doctrine, and ſpake evil of his Miracles, he ſpared not to proclaim Woe upon Woe: nor was it inconſiſtent with his Commiſſion ſo to do, for it was as good Goſpel as the other was to preach the glad Tidings of Salvation. He came, as he ſaith, *to ſeek and ſave that which was loſt*, and he will ſave them in ſuch a way as ſeemeth good unto him, ſometimes by the Spirit of meekneſs perſwading and inviting men to Repentance, and ſometimes by ſhaking the Rod over them. But for ſuch as are obſtinate in their Wickedneſs, and will by no means be reclaimed from their Sins, he ſaith to them, *for Judgment am I come into the World that they which ſee not* (that is will not ſee) *might be made blind* (*Joh.* 9. 39.) which is a Judgment (queſtionleſs) very dreadful, yea what worſe can be imagined than to be ſtruck with a ſpiritual Blindneſs? a Blindneſs that brings ſuch a thick Darkneſs upon the Soul of man, that though the Light of the Knowledge of the Glory of God ſhineth clearly about him, yet is he not able to diſcern it, but walks on ſtill in darkneſs till he fall into

to the miſt or blackneſs of Darkneſs, which will hold for ever.

But here a doubt muſt of neceſſity be reſolved, doth Chriſt ſay that he came not to judge the World, and doth he ſay alſo that for Judgment he did come into the World? doth he the ſame thing, which he ſaith he doth not? is Chriſt divided? is there yea and nay in the Word of Truth, and diſſenſion in the Spirit of Unity? God forbid any of us ſhould ſo think, much leſs write or teach ſo: certainly there is a Truth in both theſe ſayings, which is moſt infallible: but how then ſhall we reconcile them? for my part I cannot better unriddle this Doubt, than in the Words of a moſt learned and right reverend Author Dr. *Edward Reynolds*, Biſhop of *Norwich*, who, in his Explication of the one hundred and tenth Pſalm, thus writeth; there are two events of Chriſt's coming, the one Principal and by him intended, the other Accidental and Occaſional, growing out of the Indiſpoſition of the Subject unto whom he was ſent. The Main and Eſſential Buſineſs of the Goſpel of Chriſt is to declare Salvation, and to ſet open unto men a Door of eſcape from the Wrath to come; but when men wilfully ſtand out and neglect ſo great Salvation, then Secondarily doth Chriſt prove unto thoſe men a Stone of Offence, and the Goſpel a Savour of Death unto Death. As that Potion which was intended for a Cure by the Phyſitian may upon occaſion of the indiſpoſedneſs of the Body, and ſtubborn Radication of the Diſeaſe, haſten a mans end ſooner than the Diſeaſe it ſelf would have done: ſo that to the wicked the Word of God is a two-edged Sword indeed, an Edge in the Law, and an Edge in the Goſpel, they are on every ſide beſet with Condemnation, if they go to the Law, that cannot ſave them, becauſe they have broken it, if they go to the Goſpel, that will not ſave them, becauſe they have contemned it.

In ſhort, this we ſee was our Saviours Work after he had entred upon his Office, viz, to preach Salvation to all thoſe that would believe in him, and to preach Damnation to the Unbelievers and Impenitent. And this, if we will make full Proof of our Miniſtry, muſt be ours who are his Miniſters. A neceſſity is laid upon us, and woe will be to us if we preach not the Goſpel, yea and woe will be to us if we preach not the Law; knowing the goodneſs of the Lord we are to perſwade men to Repentance, and when we know alſo the Terrour of the Lord muſt we be ſilent? no in no wiſe, we are, ſaith St. *Paul*, upon that account to perſwade likewiſe; but if Perſwaſions will do no good, we are to terrify them with the threatnings of the Law. 2. *Cor.* 5. 11.

Examples we have alſo of the Servants of God upon Scripture-record. Prophets and Apoſtles, who were wont not only to bind up the broken-hearted, but to batter the Hard-hearted with the Hammer of the Law that they might be broken, they did Preach Liberty to the Captives, and Captivity likewiſe to the Libertines. Of what Spirit think ye was the Apoſtle *Paul* when he made *Felix* to tremble, preaching to him of *Righteouſneſs*, *Temperance*, *and Judgment to come* ? or when he rebuked *Elymas* the Sorcerer with indignation as hot as Fire, *O full of all ſubtilty and miſchief, thou Child of the Devil, thou Enemy of all Righteouſneſs*, &c. or St. *Peter* when he had to do with *Simon Magus*, telling him to his Face (though he was in his time accounted Τις μέγας ſome great one) *that he was in the Gall of Bitterneſs, and in the Bond of Iniquity* ? or *John Baptiſt* when he told *Herod that he ſhould not marry* Herodias *his Brother* Philips *Wife* ? or *James* and *John* whom Chriſt himſelf Sirnamed *Boanerges*, Sons of Thunder, their Doctrine being ſuch, as ſhak'd the World with Terrour ? (for *James* was killed by *Herod Agrippa* to pleaſe the Jews, who, it ſeems, probably, were madded with his Preaching, and *John* was as Thunder and Lightning to the Hereticks that roſe up after the Death of the other Apoſtles, as Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory makes manifeſt.)

As the Apoſtles were, in this Senſe, legal Preachers, ſo were the Prophets before them; they did not run into Corners to ſmother the Will of him that ſent them, but with much Confidence cryed aloud and ſpared not to tell the Greateſt they were ſent unto, their Tranſgreſſions and the Wrath that hung over them for their Sins. Did not *Nathan* ſay unto *David*, *thou art the man*, pronouncing withal a terrible Judgment that ſhould fall upon him and his Houſe? and what a dreadful Meſſage was that which *Elijah* ſent to *Jeroboam* the King of Iſrael? and that which *Elijah* pronounced upon *Ahab* and his Poſterity? durſt *Michaiah* tell him the ſaid *Ahab*, he ſhould not go up to *Ramoth Gilead* to Battel, when notwithſtanding he knew the Kings Wrath would be enkindled againſt him for it? and was not the Spirit of *Eliſha* notably quickned by the Spirit of God, when he ſaid to *Jehoram* a wicked and Idolatrous King, *what have I to doe with thee? get thee to the Prophets of thy Father and the Prophets of thy Mother*, though he knew that the King had ſo much to doe with him, that if he had but ſaid the Word to the meaneſt Servant that ate the Salt of his Court, go and take his Head from him, he would have done it?

Theſe Examples may ſuffice to ſhew unto us the Faithfulneſs and

and Zeal of the Servants of God, Apoſtles and Prophets, how with particular Application to the Stouteſt that bare an Head, have freely made known Gods Diſpleaſure for Sin by Smart Reprehenſions, as well as by Gentle Perſwaſions.

Ob. But theſe were men of an extraordinary Spirit.

Sol. What then? are not Miniſters now to deliver the whole Counſel of God, as well as other before them? or are we fallen into ſuch times wherein men live more Righteouſly, more Soberly, more Holy than heretofore, and ſo we may be ſaved the Labour of Reprehending, and making our Philipicks and Declamations againſt the World for Sin? I wiſh it were ſo, but alaſs alaſs! how can we forbear this part of our Office in pronouncing Indignation and Wrath, Tribulation and Anguiſh upon every Soul of man that doth Evil, when ſo little of the Power of Godlineſs appears amongſt us, when Zeal is accounted madneſs, and to be pious in any kind is to be expoſed to Contempt, when Atheiſm gives Check to Chriſtianity it ſelf, and all manner of Debauchery groweth up to a prodigious height, eſpecially when Laſciviouſneſs is become *Magnatum Ludus*, as *Eraſmus* called it, and that unmanly Vice of Drunkenneſs is ſo common among all ſorts, there being now adays *Gallanto*, *Flanto*, *Ranto*, Drunkards as frequently to be ſeen in our Streets as drunken Beggars?

So King Charles the firſt called it.

Is then the Spirit of *Eli* ſufficient for theſe times? is it a time now to be mealy-mouthed, to ſooth up Sins with Plauſible Euphemiſmes, and good, (or rather bad) Conſtructions? away with ſuch Lukewarmneſs! never was there more need of a Rowſing Soul-ſearching Miniſtry: let men judge of us what they pleaſe, caſting upon us Imputations of railing, yet muſt we not ſpare to Rebuke them, ſharply leſt the great Shepherd and Biſhop of Souls rebuke us for our Negligence and unfaithfulneſs at the laſt day.

Q. But would not gentle perſwading and exhorting do better, and the Promiſes of Heaven and Happineſs prevail more than the Terrors of Hell?

A. Give me leave to anſwer this Queſtion in the Words of another Reverend and Religious Biſhop of our own.

Men now adays are ſo deſperately ſet upon their own ſinful Ways, that the Promiſes of Life and Salvation are but a mockery to them, *Let Mercy be ſhewed to the Wicked, yet he will not learn Righteouſneſs*, *Iſ.* 26. 10.

Preach Honour, and Glory, and Peace, a Garland of Righteouſneſs, an Incorruptible Crown, Fruit of the Tree of Life, Sight of the

the Face of God, following the Lamb, Fellowſhip with Angels and Saints, and the Congregation of the Firſtborn, new Names and white Garments, Pleaſures at the right Hand of God, and fulneſs of Joy in his Preſence for evermore. They are as obſtinately bent, and unmovably ſetled againſt theſe Bleſſings of God, as *Daniel* againſt the Hire of *Belſhazzer*, *Keep thy Rewards to thy ſelfe, and give thy Gifts to another*, *Dan.* 5.

Alaſs, men are not won nor enamoured with the Expectation of good things, and the Revelation of the Sons of God, which the whole Creature longeth and groaneth for, ſavoureth no more unto them than a Box of putrified Oyntment. What's to be done then? Is there no way to ſave their Souls? or to quicken, and put Life into them? yes if the Bleſſings of ſix Levites upon Mount *Gerizim* will not move them, let them hear the Curſings of ſix other upon Mount *Ebal*; If they take no Pleaſure in the Beauty of *Sion*, let the Thunder and Lightning of *Sinai* put them in Fear, and make them believe there is a God of Judgment. If the Spirit of Gentleneſs take no Place, let them feel the Smart of the Rod, the Rod of the Law, which poſſibly through Gods Bleſſing may be a means to bring them to Repentance.

Upon the whole matter then, Miniſters of the Goſpel are not, upon the account of this preceding Diſcourſe, to forbear preaching the Law, as it is eſtabliſhed by Chriſt to be a Rule to us all for the ordering of our Converſation aright in any kind, nor as it may be a means, according to the Example of Chriſt, to rouze and awaken the World out of the Lethargy of Sin wherein by the Deluſion of the Devil it is miſerably laid aſleep, eſpecially in this Generation; but as it was in the Hand of *Moſes*, that *Quondam Mediatour* (which held it out as a Covenant of Works of the Law, the Form and Tenour whereof was *do this and Live*, otherwiſe *curſed is every one that continueth not in all things that are Written in the Law to do them*, Implying that without Juſtification by the Works of the Law, no Fleſh ſhould be ſaved) it is not now to be Preached, for ſuch a legal Preaching muſt be acknowledged by us all, to be Inconſiſtent with the Grace of the Goſpel, derogatory from the Honour of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and overthroweth all the Hope of our Salvation.

Deo Gloria mihi Venia.

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Divinity.

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An Anſwer to Mr. Ferguſon's *Doctrine*, about Chriſt's Juſtification and Sanctification, with an Account of the ends and intents of Chriſts death and paſſion, conſidered as a Reaſon, by *John Knowles*, *Oct.*

The Primitive Inſtitution, or a ſeaſonable diſcourſe of Catechiſm, wherein is ſhewed the Antiquity, Neceſſity, and Benefits thereof, together with its ſutableneſs to heal the diſtemper of the Church, by *L. Addiſon*, D. D. *Twelves.*

A Sermon, Preached at the Funeral of a Man found drowned in a Pit, inlarged by the Author upon the account of ſudden death, *oct.*

A Sermon, Preached at a Viſitation in *Chicheſter*, by *W. Howel*, *Quarto.*

The School of Righteouſneſs, A Sermon Preached before the King on a General Faſt day, by his Grace, the preſent Arch-Biſhop of *Canterbury*, *Qua.*

A Diſcourſe of the Lawfulneſs of taking Uſe for Mony, by Sir *Robert Filmer*; with a large Preface to it by Sir *Roger Twiſden*, *Tw.*

A modeſt Plea for the Clergy, wherein is briefly conſidered their Original, Antiquity, and Neceſſity, together with the true and falſe grounds of their being ſo much ſlighted, neglected, and unjuſtly deſpiſed.

Hugo Grotius Catechiſm in Greek, Latin, and Engliſh, with a Praxis, *Oct.*

The Spirit of Propheſie; a Treatiſe to prove that Chriſt and his Apoſtles were Prophets. Together with the Divine Authority of Chriſtian Religion and the holy Scriptures, the inſufficiency of Humane Reaſon, and the reaſonableneſs of the Chriſtian Faith, Hope, and Practiſe deduced therefrom; and aſſerted againſt Mr. *Hobbs*, and the Treatiſe of *Humane Reaſon*: Recommended to the Preſs by

Dr.

Dr. *Gunning*, Lord Bishop of *Ely*, *Oct.*

The King-killing Doctrine of the Jesuits, delivered to the French King, concerning the re-establishment of the Jesuits in his Dominion: Written in French by a Learned Roman Catholick.

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A Sermon Preached before Sir *J. Edwards*, Lord Mayor of *London*, at the Election of Sir *R. Clayton*, by *G. Hascard*, D. D. and Chaplain in Ordinary to his Majesty.

A Sermon Preached before Sir *R. Clayton*, Lord Mayor of *London*, by *Tho. Manningham*, Fellow of New Colledg in *Oxford*, *Qua.*

These six last are new.

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FINIS.